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LETTERS AND MEMOIR OF HUGH HASTINGS ROMILLY

S. H. ROMILLY



LETTERS FROM

THE WESTERN PACIFIC

AND MASHONALAND

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

FROM MY VERANDAH IN NEW GUINEA.

Sketches and Traditions by H. H. ROMILLY, C.M.G. With an Introduction by ANDREW LANG, M.A. Demy 8vo. 1889. xxvi., 277 pages. Maps. Cloth, 7s. 6d.

The Daily News says: "Since the immortal 'Eöthen' of Kinglake, we have met with very few books of travel so fresh, original, and brilliant."

Pall Mall Gazette: "Exceptional in containing so much valuable information in such readable form."

*** Nearly out of print, and will not be reprinted.

D. NUTT, 270–271 STRAND.



LETTERS FROM
THE WESTERN PACIFIC
AND MASHONALAND
1878—1891

BY

HUGH H. ROMILLY, C.M.G.

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC, AND SOMETIME ACTING COMMISSIONER OF NEW GUINEA

EDITED WITH MEMOIR BY HIS BROTHER

SAMUEL H. ROMILLY

INTRODUCTION BY LORD STANMORE, G.C.M.G.

WITH SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON

DAVID NUTT, 270–271 STRAND

1893

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INTRODUCTION.

In one of the first years of the present century, a tablet to the memory of a youth of twenty, who had died on duty in Ceylon, was placed on a wall of the Fort Church at Colombo, close to the Governor's seat in that building. A name, two dates, the number of a regiment, and the age of the poor lad are inscribed upon it. That is all. There seemed to me something intensely pathetic in this short story of a wholly forgotten life, and often as I saw it, it never failed to bring vividly before me that great army of young Englishmen, who have perished far from home, and obscurely, but whose unrecorded work has done so much to build up and to maintain our Indian and Colonial Empire.

Of that army—for tropical service killed him, though he died in England—Hugh Romilly was one, and though he had a marked and attractive personality, it is the typical rather than the individual character of the career which the letters and diaries contained in this volume depict, that gives to them, I think, their chief interest and

value. In them we see him, first, as a young adventurer, abandoning good social position and fair prospects at home to encounter a hard life, and ready to take advantage of any opening—no matter what—for making his own way in the world. We find him next as a Government servant, charged with all sorts of duties, some of them not unimportant, though performed in one of the remotest corners of the earth. Then comes a bright moment of more independent position and of flattering hope, followed by a long period of isolation and virtual solitude, among men of inferior races and inferior men of his own race; an experience which few, if any, undergo with entire impunity; especially when such isolation is made more bitter by neglect and forgetfulness on the part of official superiors at home. Lastly, we see him in quite another part of the world, at the head of a prospecting expedition in Africa. Such lives are not uncommon. They seem to be failures, and so, as regards the success and fame of the man himself, they are; but it is to the mass of these seeming failures, to the labour of these lives to all appearance wasted, that Great Britain largely owes the place she holds in distant colonies and savage lands.

Of course, the letters here printed must not be taken as at all a complete or even, in some respects, an accurate picture of the life which they describe.

In writing to others, Romilly naturally dwelt chiefly on what was likely to amuse or interest his correspondents, and consequently gave special prominence to what was odd and unusual. Moreover, he always employed strong colouring, maintaining that a dash of exaggeration was necessary to bring home actual facts to dull imaginations. Above all, these extracts cannot give, and do not profess to give, anything more than detached glimpses of the writer's environment. The fragmentary picture presented by them resembles that of a country partially seen through the rifts and openings in a mist; a few particular points are very clearly perceived, but little idea is gained of what the landscape as a whole is like. It would be a vast mistake to conclude from a few hasty expressions, and a few exceptional cases, that, as a rule, missionaries are meddling and mischievous, British colonists inhuman, officials at home negligent, or native officials useless.

Of Romilly himself I can say little that has not been said by his brother in the opening chapter. But as my testimony is that of a man bound to him by no ties of relationship or early association, I may be allowed to express my agreement in what is there written. He had a quick intelligence, great physical strength, and an easy temper, and he knew how both to obey and to command. These are among the qualities most needed in the administration of a

rough country, and but for adverse circumstances he might have risen to high distinction. Our personal relations have left me none but agreeable recollections, and the very various duties at different times entrusted to him whilst a member of my staff were all performed in such a manner as to afford me entire satisfaction.

In this, however, he was not singular, for no man has been more fortunate than I have been in those serving immediately under me. With hardly an exception, I have received from them assistance, not given only as to an official chief, but as to a personal friend—assistance which has established claims on my permanent gratitude and affection. At the close of a long official life, I may perhaps be allowed thus publicly to express my acknowledgments to those whose help has so greatly lightened its burdens.

STANMORE.

ASCOT, *October* 1893.

LETTERS FROM THE WESTERN PACIFIC.

CHAPTER I.

PERSONAL.

It was the spirit of adventure which induced my brother Hugh Romilly to set forth in the summer of 1879, at the age of twenty-three, to seek his fortune in the Islands of the Pacific. Commercial pursuits, of which he had previously had a brief experience, naturally did not afford much attraction to one whose boyish ambition it had always been (as he has told us) to become a pirate. Accordingly, when an opportunity offered itself of accompanying the Hon. Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon (now Lord Stanmore) in his capacity of Governor to the recently created colony of Fiji, with the attraction of probable adventures, and certain emancipation from the routine of office, it is not surprising that he eagerly jumped at the chance. As he has said in the Introduction to one of his books, "From my Verandah in New Guinea," his decision was the

result of a long conversation held with the late Lady Gordon at one of the last balls given in the London season of 1879, and within a few weeks he was already embarked with Sir Arthur and his staff, *en route* for the Western Pacific. He started with no official position of any sort, and no very definite prospect beyond that of looking about him in the young colony, on the Micawber principle of something turning up. But though no definite prospects were held out, he yet started under good auspices. No young man embarking upon a new and adventurous career, could have had a more excellent counsellor and friend than Romilly had in Sir Arthur Gordon. Though it is well known that Sir Arthur's views as to the right method of dealing with native races differed widely from those held by the majority of the white settlers, no one could inspire those who knew him with greater confidence and devotion than he did; no one could be a better friend than he was to any one upon whom he could rely, and when his confidence was once given to a man, he would stick to him through thick and thin. This was the case with Hugh Romilly. As will be seen from his letters, an opportunity was soon put in his way of trying him to see what sort of stuff he was made of, and it is not too much to say that he made the most of his opportunity. The result was, that before he had been in the colony six months an official position as stipendiary magistrate for an important district was given him, and from

that moment his future career was practically ensured. Sir Arthur Gordon had given him his trial, bestowed his confidence upon him as a result of the trial, and was ever afterwards ready to befriend him, and assist him with his advice and experience. How highly Romilly prized Sir Arthur's confidence appears throughout his letters. He had the highest respect and sincerest devotion for his chief, and was a thorough believer and follower in his policy in all matters relating to dealings between whites and blacks. These views of his, and especially the active part he took in helping to enforce them, caused him to come in for a good share of official unpopularity with the white settlers. The Queensland Press was especially bitter against him at one time, much to his amusement, his nature being such as to make him utterly indifferent to such attacks, as all those who knew him will admit. This unpopularity however was entirely confined to the Press and those who knew him only in his official character. To those who knew him in private life, there was no more delightful companion. His inexhaustible fund of good humour, and his congenial knack of adapting himself to whatever society he might be thrown among, endeared him to all alike. He made new friends wherever he went, and he never lost an old one. It was no doubt in great measure owing to this happy power of being able to enter so thoroughly into the interests and occupations of others, that he was able to ingratiate

himself with the natives with whom so much of his time was spent. Savages, like children, seem to have an instinct of their own which enables them to recognise a friend and sympathiser when they see him, and Hugh Romilly was always devoted to children and they to him.

Some part of his work—such as the infliction of punishment on savage tribes for outrages committed on white men—was most distasteful to him, knowing as he did that in nine cases out of ten it was the white man who was originally to blame. The hardships he underwent in the form of frequent illness from exposure to poisonous climate, want of proper food, and—worst of all to one so suited to society as he was—complete isolation for months at a time from all civilized life or news of the outer world, were severe enough to have damped the ardour and spirits of most men. He bore it all cheerfully and patiently however, and it is seldom that any note of complaint is heard in his letters. His good spirits, combined with patient endurance, remained with him to the very end, when in July 1892, at the early age of thirty-six he finally succumbed to one of the many attacks of malarial fever from which after his long residence in New Guinea he never was entirely free.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE WAY OUT.

S.S. "CITY OF SYDNEY," HONOLULU,
August 11, 1879.

I FIND that by writing from here I shall save a fortnight or perhaps three weeks. We are having a pleasant enough voyage so far as weather goes, but this ship is simply beastly. To begin with, we are tremendously crowded—three in every cabin. Then the enormous number of different smells on board is almost unbearable. We go down to the saloon for meals with very good appetites, which immediately disappear on account of the horrible smell of shut-up Chinamen. Then my cabin, besides having the ordinary smell of bilge water, is next to the butcher's shop, which is always in a filthy condition, and my two stable companions,* even in this hot weather, do not consider it worth while to take any clothes off, but turn in "all standing." They have now done this for a week, and will probably pursue the same con-

* It may be as well to mention that these "companions" did not belong to Sir Arthur Gordon's party.—ED.

duct till we get to Sydney. Besides all this, the hencoops and boats full of rotting cabbages make a combination difficult to imagine. We have become tremendous grumblers.

I have made an alteration in my plans on account of Sir Arthur expecting to stay some days at Samoa. That is to say, I am going to take the second packet from Sydney instead of the first. By doing this I shall avoid getting to Fiji before him, and he has asked me to Government House if I go by that boat, which he could not have done if I had gone on at once. I am also to take the boat from Sydney to Melbourne, as W. wants me to see Lord Normanby for him. I think it very likely that when I am actually there staying with Sir Arthur he will propose some appointment to me, though he has said nothing about it to me yet.

There is really very little to write about. Our party on board are chiefly fourth- or fifth-rate Yankees; there is no approach to a lady among them. The most lady-like of our party is a rope-dancer going over for the Sydney Exhibition. They have started a newspaper on board which is occasionally amusing. I am writing this on board, as we sha'n't have time to write at Honolulu. We get in there late at night, and leave before daybreak, so we sha'n't see the place much. The Pacific is certainly very beautiful, quite different to the Atlantic. We knock flights of flying fish out of every third or fourth wave with our bows. The colour

of the water too and the sunsets are very remarkable. I must leave off now, as it is almost impossible to write on account of the heavy rolling of this ship. We have just got into the N.E. trade wind, and half the passengers are having a second turn of sea-sickness. Although we are now in the tropics, it is delightfully cool compared to America. A sea-voyage is calculated to develop all one's animal qualities very much. We sleep all the afternoon—in fact think of nothing but eating, drinking, sleeping, and smoking. We tried to read Fijian and succeeded pretty well on the Atlantic, but on the Pacific we find it impossible.

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY,
September 5, 1879.

MY DEAR L.,—I send this by the Admiralty bag, and it ought to reach you almost as soon as the pencil scrawl I sent by P. & O. last Tuesday. I told you I was going for a most interesting cruise* to some of the innumerable islands in the West Pacific, and also to New Guinea and New Britain. You may possibly know that these places are wholly unexplored, some of the islands never having been visited by white men. Our chief occupation will be inquiring into the numerous murders that are committed in these regions,

* N.B.—This cruise did not come off.—ED.

and, if possible, the arrest and summary disposal of the murderers.

Wilson (the Commodore), with whom I am staying, has just returned from a similar expedition. We want to get our cruise over before the hurricane season commences, as the navigation in these parts is most difficult, there being no reliable charts, and many reefs absolutely unknown. If the chiefs refuse, as they almost always do, to hand a murderer over to justice, a strong party of men are landed and their towns are destroyed.

I am going, I suppose, as Sir Arthur's secretary. He (Commodore Wilson) has also discovered many new specimens of orchids, palms, and crotons, which he has sent to England. Sir Arthur is making an expedition to the island of Tonga; I have therefore availed myself of numerous invitations, and go on to Fiji the end of this month, arriving there the first week in October.

We deposited Sir Arthur and six of his party at Pago Pago, one of the most beautiful tropical islands in these seas.

WAGGA WAGGA,
September 28, 1879.

MY DEAR G.,—I write from a little township no doubt well known to you, as the home of the oppressed nobleman known here as Sir Roger Tichborne and at home as the "Claimant." I

have just finished a journey of 100 miles, from "Wodonga," in a coach of the country, the most uncomfortable vehicle which was ever invented. The coach, which was called the "Lily," was re-christened by us "The Sudden Jerk," a most appropriate name. The only other passenger besides myself was a Yankee, armed to the teeth on account of the Kelly gang of Bush Rangers, who had what they call here "stuck up" one of the coaches on this road, shot the driver, and robbed the mails and passengers. I was on the box-seat, and agreed with the coachman that it was a grand opportunity for a practical joke on the Yankee inside. He, the coachman, who rejoiced in the name of "Jacky Tommy Smith," said he knew a short cut through the bush which saved five miles, but necessitated pulling down the fence of an Irish selecter, who was a most determined man according to Jacky Tommy, and always resented the intrusion with much bad language and an American axe. The plan was that the coachman was to pull down the fence while I held the horses, and when the selecter made his appearance was to exclaim "Here's Kelly!" It all turned out precisely as we had planned it, for while we were demolishing the fence the Irishman rushed up, with much language which I will spare you a repetition of, and brandishing his American axe before the leaders' noses. "Here's Kelly!" shouted out the driver. "You don't say," said the Yankee, quietly covering him through the

window with one pistol, while he held another in his left hand. "Is that raly so." The driver, however, seeing that the poor man was really in some danger of being shot, got between him and the Yankee, and said, "It's all right, sir; we will get him alive and claim the Government reward;" and then got on his box on the other side, and drove off at full gallop. The Yankee has told every one here that we lost the reward of £8000 through our cowardice. I have been enjoying myself very much in Australia—kangaroo and emu hunting, and shooting wild cattle and wild horses. I sent a box of furs home for you, but I should like you to give some to C. R. One day, out kangaroo hunting, we had to swim a creek which was flooded, and my horse, who was a very bad swimmer, very nearly succeeded in drowning me. Coming home, I thought I would not give him a chance of doing so again, so I took all my clothes off, strapped them on the saddle, started the horse in, and proceeded to swim after him myself. As soon as he got to the other side he was so frightened at my appearance, or possibly shocked, that he started off home at full gallop with my clothes on his back. Of course the fellows with me started after him, and pretended to try and catch him, though I don't think they tried much, but anyway I had to walk a mile home in the costume of a Queensland gin—*i.e.*, nothing at all. As it was a bachelor establishment I did not mind very much, but walked boldly up to the front door,

where I found a neighbouring squatter on a visit, *and his wife*. Luckily she turned and fled, and I got safely into a dry suit of clothes. After this little incident my host thought no further introduction necessary, and we both felt as if we had known each other for years. Galloping through thick bush here is very different to anything at home; in fact, if you don't leave everything to your horse you must come to grief, as you are sure either to run into a tree or crab-hole. At first it was very nervous work, as it is almost impossible to prevent trying to guide your horse. If you do, however, your horse makes up his mind to go round a tree one way, and you are sure to try and go round the other. As a matter of course, my first day I ran my head into three or four gum-trees, and though the family head was too hard to mind very much, I found that it detracted somewhat from the pleasure of the sport. I went to a ball in Sydney while I was there, and found my partners very anxious to place me at my ease with them at once. They had all got nick-names, which they all told me at once. A certain Miss J. informed me that by her intimate friends she was called Fuz-buz, and that if I was pleased with her appearance and conversation, I was to consider myself at liberty to do so likewise. Fuz-buz and I are now great friends, but on her asking me if I also did not rejoice in any pseudonym, I told her the one I had been given when I first went to school, but even Fuz-buz's fair

lips refused to address me by so unpoetical a name. The officers and crew of the Commodore's ship, *Wolverene*, were getting up "Pinafore" when I left, but which I was not in Sydney to see.

Lord Augustus Loftus is very civil to me, and I dined with him one night in Sydney.

CHAPTER III.

FIJI—FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

ROMILLY arrived in Fiji in October 1879. He was not long without being given some employment, for in November he was sent off in command of a party to the neighbouring island of Kandavu, to induce the natives to pay their taxes and attend to their cotton plantations. This expedition was successful, and is described in the extract from his journal given in this chapter.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FIJI,
October 13, 1879.

As you see, here I am at last, after a baddish passage in a small and dirty boat from Sydney. I am at present delighted with Fiji. Nasova, which by the way is the name of the Government House, is a most lovely place. Enormous bushes of crotons come down to the water's edge, with a background of cocoa-nut palms and bananas.

However, I will not attempt to describe it, as it would be impossible.

turn him as he was too heavy, so I waited for nearly an hour till some one came up to help, as the native was too sulky at being beaten to do so.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
October 25, 1879.

I write this in a great hurry as I am just ordered off to Kandavu, in charge of a party to stir up the natives there, as they are a lazy lot and won't pick their cotton. It is probable I shall be back before the next mail goes out, but it is quite on the cards that I may be a week or even a fortnight getting there, as, though it is only about seventy miles, there is a very strong head trade wind, and I go in a little ten-ton cutter. I told you in my last letter that I was to go to Rotumah with Arthur Gordon, or Tui Rotumah* as he is now called. We had all the chiefs over here the other day to make over the island, and a very fine lot of fellows they are. It was in consequence of a religious war last year between the Wesleyans and Roman Catholic missions, that they finally decided to make their island over to us. Though a small island, with only about 4000 inhabitants, the people are quite a distinct race from any other South Sea Islanders, being a mixture of the Chinese and Samoan races, having the faces of the Chinese with the enormous

* *I.e.*, King of Rotumah.



From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G. *To face p. 18*

bodies of the Samoans. The great difficulty there is fresh water. There is absolutely none—no river and no wells, the water in the latter being salt. The people live entirely on cocoa-nut water. We of course are taking large quantities of beer, and also tanks to collect rain-water. The Governor told me to-day that when we return from Rotumah, which will be as soon as the answer comes out from England about the place, I am to begin my duties as private secretary.

I shall have a fortnight's hard walking in Kandavu.

Knollys has just come in to say I am to start at once, so no time for more. If I am back before the mail, I will add to this.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

I left Nasova on the 25th of October to go to Kandavu, for the purpose of stirring up the natives. The point I was anxious to make was Tavuki Bay, at the head of which is the town of Tavuki. The Buli or chief of the district is the head man of the island, and to him accordingly I had to go first. On leaving Nasova I had a crew of five men—Lilo, a half-caste, as coxswain; my interpreter, Mr. Thomas; two of the armed native constabulary, rejoicing in the names of Mothe and Damoni—and myself. I went first to Rewa, about a twelve hours' run, and having left the cutter at the mouth of that river with

instructions to follow me as soon as possible, proceeded in a canoe to the Roko's town. Here we arrived about 12 P.M., and the Roko* had to be woke up and have the news broken to him that we proposed passing the night at his house. This, though apparently an easy job, was in fact by no means so. In the old days it was a clubbing offence to wake a high chief, and the Roko of Rewa was a very high chief indeed. Mr. Thomas, however, having sat down at the foot of the mosquito net, began to tickle the soles of his feet, which seems to be the approved method, but which seemed to me a most futile plan, as in texture and penetrability they much resembled the epidermis of the rhinoceros. After about an hour and a half of this, I gave him a punch in the ribs, which had the desired effect. He informed me, when he was awake, that if he had known it was me he would have woke up an hour sooner. The rule in Fiji is, the higher the chief the longer time he takes to wake. I sincerely trust it may never be my lot, when tired and sleepy and anxious to turn in, to have to wake up King Thakombau. Of course, having woke him, he insisted on having a brew of yangona, which was duly chewed and partaken of.

We got on from Rewa to Nukulau, a small uninhabited island at the southern mouth of the Rewa, and camped there next night. There, beyond that the mosquitoes were exceptionally

* Native Governor of a Province.—ED.

large and savage, and the rats showed a decided liking for our toes, we spent a most pleasant night. From there next day to Benga, an island very seldom visited by whites, but where the Buli* entertained me capitally. An old hen, which we finally ate for dinner, gave the whole island a capital run, but finally succumbed to numbers. Then from Benga, at daybreak, to Kandavu, which we reached late at night, being cold and wet, having been beating against a strong head trade wind for fifteen hours. The Buli of Tavuki not being at home, we were received in all state by the head of the police and the Buli's daughter, a very pretty girl of seventeen, and called Bula Matanisiinga, who made me garlands of flowers and bead necklaces. When the Buli arrived and learnt what my errand was, he immediately prepared a Fijian ceremony in my honour, consisting in a present of food. As it was my first present, a short description might not be amiss. Mr. Thomas sat on my right and the rest of my party behind, and then the present was seen advancing, supported by about a hundred men. It consisted of pigs, fowls, four piles of yams, taro, bread-fruit and cocoa-nuts, besides sugar-cane, yangona roots, pine-apples, and sweet potatoes. The master of the ceremonies, an old chief called Ratu† Osea, whom I had picked up at Rewa, then

* Chief of a district.—Ed.

† The title given to all chiefs of rank.—Ed.

put his hands on the food, and said, "Thank you, oh! thank you—how very good of you to think of me;" or words to that effect. Then as much as I wanted for myself and party was set aside, and the rest divided among their chiefs and their followers, and every preparation made for a big feast. After dinner, an enormous meki or dance was given, all the girls in the neighbouring towns having been assembled. They were most beautifully got up in garlands of flowers, and smeared all over with cocoa-nut oil, and their hair powdered with sandal-wood till the smell became a little overpowering.

They then performed what they told me was a very old meki, and the words they sang were not only unintelligible to me, but to them also. I ought to have felt much honoured by their selecting me for such special distinction as this. After that, all the men performed a dance by torchlight, and went through the various fighting attitudes—clubbing, spearing, ducking the head to a shot, &c. They requested my leave to carry the dance on till daylight, which I gave, but did not undertake to stay there myself all that time. During my stay in Kandavu, every chief whose house I slept at went through the same ceremonies, some on an even larger scale, as they are very fond of trying to cut each other out. At the beginning of the mekis, each girl had six or eight yards of masi, or white native cloth, wound round her.

At the conclusion this was taken off and presented to me, and I calculated that before I left Kandavu I must have had considerably more than a mile of the stuff given me. Of course I gave a lot of it back. I had decided to hold two meetings of three districts each, and to make them a speech at each place. This I did with the happiest results, but an account of which I shall not give here.

In walking across the island from Soso to Raki Raki, I came across an old heathen temple. It was very like a Stonehenge on a small scale, consisting of ten clusters of stone arranged in a semicircle, each cluster consisting of three upright stones, with one big flat one at the top. The chief told me it was where they used to receive presents of food—of course cannibal ones; but natives are very much ashamed of those days, and very few will confess to having partaken of long pig, as they call it. Old Ratu Osea, whom I picked up at Rewa, was a most amusing old man. He was a tremendous hand at praying, and could not bear to hear a hymn being sung in another house without starting an opposition one himself. On one occasion, going in the boat from Wai Levu to Soso, I hooked a forty-pound fish, and just as I was lifting him into the boat the line broke. Old Osea at once began to pray, saying we had two things to be thankful for—we had a fair wind and had had a good breakfast, and it was too much to

expect a fine fish as well. He then prayed for all the boat's crew by name, and tried to pray for me; but my name was a little beyond him, and he compromised it by calling me Misa Potam. How he manufactured that name out of mine, I know not. For a long time I thought him the most religious man I had ever met, but I heard afterwards that in a moment of mental aberration he had knocked his wife on the head with an axe, after which my confidence in him was much shaken.

Out of my boat's crew of six, four were so ill with dysentery as to be useless; and my coxswain, Lilo, had fever so badly as to greatly precipitate my return home. I had therefore to ship two men at Kandavu, one to steer, and one to hold Lilo down. Coming back we put into a small island called Ono. I picked up many curiosities there in the shape of clubs, war fans, &c., which are getting very scarce now in the group. I found the *Emerald* had arrived on my return, also the mail.

NASOVA,

November 10, 1879.

Here I am back again, just in time for the mail. As you will see from G.'s letter, I had a very pleasant time in Kandavu, having been treated with much state. The chief thing I wish to impress upon you is, that after this mail it is very uncertain what

means of communication* I shall have with Fiji. At present there is none beyond that of occasional whalers, but it is most probable that a communication will be established from here very shortly. You must not therefore feel anxious about not hearing from me. I don't anticipate being there more than four months, and during that time I hope I shall have at least two or three opportunities of writing. You might be just as badly off for letters if I was living in some parts of this group. The people in Rotumah are a very nice lot from all accounts, very civilised and clever, as some years ago it used to be a great whaling station. We have heard nothing of Arthur Gordon since he went there. I hope he won't be sent to New Guinea, as you say in your letter. I can't imagine anything more horrible. Besides the loneliness, it is one of the unhealthiest places in the world. Two expeditions only have been made there, both gold-digging ones, and almost every one died.

The natives also are far from agreeable. The country is almost unknown, only a very small portion of the coast-line having been surveyed. Of course I shall go with the Governor on his High Commission tour, but don't anticipate being there more than about a week. I hope after this you won't be anxious about me. It is almost certain that I shall miss one, very likely two, mails. However, as the people are most friendly and the climate

* *I.e.*, from Rotumah.

good, you need have no cause for alarm. I shall miss my letters just as much as you will miss mine. This letter ought to make you cheerful as to my prospects. I myself never expected such luck as being made private secretary, but the Governor once having taken a fancy to any one, always sticks to him and gets him on in every possible way.

CHAPTER IV.

TONGA-TABU AND THE BAU MEETING.

Two days after the date of the last letter, Sir Arthur Gordon sailed on board H.M.S. *Emerald* on his High Commission tour to Tonga, in the Friendly Islands, the object being to effect a treaty with the king of the place and assist him in the settlement of his accounts. Owing to a regulation which prevented His Excellency taking any one on his staff with him, except his A. D. C. and private secretary, Romilly was unable to accompany him on the *Emerald*, but followed him closely in a small vessel called the *Pretty Jane*, which had been chartered by the Government for taking the Governor's interpreters, physician, escort, &c. After assisting at the ceremonies attendant on the negotiation of the treaty, he returned at the end of the month with Sir Arthur to Fiji, in order to be present at a great meeting between the Governor and the Bau chiefs, an account of which is given in another extract taken from his journal.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

November, 1879.

The highest land in Tonga-Tabu being about forty feet, the first thing seen is the tops of the cocoa-nuts, which is rather a relief to the eye after the Fijian islands. On anchoring, I was much struck with the want of interest the people seemed to take in our arrival. There was no crowd, and in fact not a solitary individual was to be seen on the beach. I heard afterwards that it was "taboo" to stand about outside the king's house. The Tongans at first sight show an enormous amount of civilisation, and it is only on making their better acquaintance that you discover that they have picked up most of the habits of civilisation, which they would have been better without. The morning service was a most amusing sight. About a third of the ladies had beautiful silk dresses, but unfortunately there was always some important article of raiment missing. After church was over, I was much surprised to see a row of black-coated gentlemen, with college gowns and mortar-boards, and for an instant fancied myself back at Christ Church, and expected to see the Dean bringing up the rear. Instead of him, however, I saw King George, attended by his army, which consisted of four red-coated men armed with

old Tower muskets. The idea of a missionary introducing square college caps into Tonga, struck me as a trifle absurd. In the afternoon I paid the king a visit. He has just had a white elephant sent him in the shape of an equestrian picture of the Emperor of Germany, eighteen feet long and about ten feet high. I believe that the poor man is building a house for it.

NUKUALOFA, TONGA,
November 23, 1879.

MY DEAR M.,—I write this from a most remarkable place, where we have come for the purpose of making a treaty with the king. The group of islands is otherwise known as the Friendly Islands, if you wish to know precisely where I am. Prince George of Tonga is an excessively proud man, and I am sorry to say I frequently go off into roars of laughter in his royal presence at some of his remarks. For instance, when the Franco-Prussian war broke out, Prince George announced his intention of preserving a strict neutrality. (I was not there at the time.) I would give anything for you to be here to see the people going to church. It is one of the missionary rules that they go in at different entrances according to the number of clothes they have on. For instance, there is a tall hat and black coat entrance, a shirt-sleeves entrance, &c.

The ordinary "sulu" which the Fijians wear, is absolutely forbidden. The women who can afford it wear silk dresses of the most gorgeous tints. It looks rather absurd to see a lady with a very swell silk dress, and lots of bracelets and brooches and a smart bonnet, suddenly display a pair of brown feet with no shoes or stockings on! The favourite dress for the men is a frock-coat and patent leather boots. It is very strange that a place so near Fiji, where the dress of both men and women is still only a bunch of grass or a yard of calico, should be so entirely different.

I have bored you a good deal by this account of dress here, but it is most absurd after Fiji. We went to a little island, called Savage Island, the other day. It is a wonderful place, and not spoilt by contact with whalers. They treated us very kindly, and got up a war dance, which was very nice. The men formed themselves into two parties, and made believe to club and spear each other to any extent; then the women rushed in, and carried off the supposed dead.

However, I daresay all this is not very interesting to you, though I think you would like exploring a brand-new island.

I was very much disappointed at being sent here instead of to the Navigators' Islands, as there is a sanguinary war going on there. The Governor has just returned from there, and Knollys and Murray (A.D.C. and private sec.) tell me that they took

a walk out with one side (no doubt the strongest). This is a wonderful place for parrots; I keep a lot by me always. They are very easy to catch, and tame in twenty-four hours. I shall bring you home some when I come, which I hope will be in less than two years. We are to play a great cricket match here, our party on board the *Emerald* against the Islands. There is a great amusement of mine, which is to get up picnics to the neighbouring uninhabited islands. There we put on sulus, and dive for pearl-shells.

NUKUALOFA, TONGA,
November 25, 1879.

. . . .

MY DEAR L.,—Contrary to my expectations, I am able to write by this mail, though it is probably the last letter for some time. I was sent here before the Governor in the most wretched little boat, but go back with him in the *Emerald* to the Bau meeting, and then he takes me on to Rotumah. This is the most wonderful place, as far as the people go, in the world. The missionaries seem to have taught them all the useless parts of civilisation without any of the useful ones. For instance, instead of letting the people dress in the simple sulu, which is the most natural dress for this country, the missionaries import coats and trousers, silk dresses, bonnets, patent leather boots, &c.,

attended, actually built a barrier of banana leaves right round the reef, enclosing all the fish when the tide went down. The bit of the reef they enclosed was about two miles long. When the tide was low enough we began to spear, and the fish were so thick that if you missed one you probably hit another. You observe that on State occasions they do things in a wholesale way here.

In my last letter I told you about the probability of this being the last letter you will get for some time. I may as well repeat that there is not the slightest cause for anxiety on this account, as from all accounts the natives of Rotumah are a capital lot of fellows, certainly the chiefs I made the acquaintance of were. They are just recovering from a religious war, in which the Wesleyans kicked out the Roman Catholics. The missionaries so thoroughly entered into the spirit of the thing that the Wesleyans circulated a picture representing all Roman Catholics being tormented in Hell fire, while a crowd of Wesleyans, with an accurate portrait of the head missionary in the middle, dressed in his usual costume with merely the addition of a halo, are seated in Heaven, apparently much enjoying the scene below. These are the sort of devices which some of the missionaries use in this part of the world. As for all the collections at home made for them, if it was known that the missionary is always the richest man in the place, having the best house, it might do much good. The head missionary here

has far more power than the king, and has just built himself a costly house. Having made a rule that every one should wear a coat and trousers under a heavy penalty, he proceeded to import these articles, retailing them at a large profit to the natives. There was a fine for making native cloth, and a fine for any one seen smoking. Of course, nine natives out of ten have not got wherewith to pay, and in default of payment they have to work for the King for six months. I find I have been led into a dissertation on missionaries, which possibly does not interest you much; it is a question that gives more trouble than any other out here. I don't include Church of England men, but they are very few and far between.

It may amuse you to hear of a dinner the king asked me to, not that there is very much to say about it. It was a most pretentious feed, all the courses being the same as an English dinner. We began with turtle soup, and you can have no idea how very nasty turtle soup can be if made by an inferior artist. Next a huge fish baked in banana leaves was put on each plate. After this a great confusion of *entrées* in the shape of native puddings had to be consumed. Then innumerable joints and fowls, then lots of tarts. All through dinner we had the most enormous assortment of wines, presumably of the finest brand; I fear, however, that the king is in the hands of an unscrupulous Sydney wine merchant. I don't know what effect it all

had on the royal party, but on me the result was most disastrous. I will only say, however, that I share my bedroom with our chief medical officer, Dr. McGregor, who proved himself a true friend on that occasion.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

Next day, though hardly recovered from the effects of the royal cookery, we all went on board the *Emerald* and sailed for Fiji, where we arrived on December 1st. On Friday we had to start off again for the Bau meeting. It was arranged that we should rendezvous at Nasova, and when we got there that we should wait for the signal which is sent from Bau for "raising the anchor." On arrival at Moturiki we found about a hundred canoes assembled, and an enormous crowd of people, like ourselves, waiting for the ceremony of "raising the anchor." We were received by the "Buli," who led us into his house, where a mat was placed for the Governor. The envoys from Bau then came in with hundreds of feet of tappa round them, till they looked like enormous spiders, and presented the whales' teeth. The whale's tooth is most sacred, and its presentation is regarded as a sort of seal or authentication of any transaction. After all the chanting customary on a presentation of whales' teeth, the envoys began to shed their garments and

to pile them in the middle of the house. When this was done the anchor was declared "up," though we were not to start till next morning. About nine A.M. (Saturday, Dec. 5th) the Governor went on board his big canoe, whilst I, somewhat to my disappointment, had to take charge of the barge. Immediately on his embarking all the canoes and sailing-boats went about and set sail in his wake, about a hundred in number—a most picturesque sight. We found an enormous crowd awaiting us, but we paid them but little attention, as the thoughts of dinner had the mastery in our minds. There was nothing much to do till Monday, as the actual opening ceremony was not till that day. The Governor made a long speech in Fijian in the afternoon, which had but little interest for me. Sunday was a most idle day, spent chiefly in calling on native friends and drinking kava. On Monday we all went up to the meeting-house for the opening ceremony. In the corners of the rara were arranged huge piles of yams. This was merely a stand-by in case all the other food should be exhausted before the end of the meeting. On our arrival the dance began. There were about six hundred men with clubs and spears, and a band of about a hundred men to sing and beat on the ground with long split bamboos. Each man in the dance had as much tappa wound round him as he could conveniently carry, besides likus* of flowers. They had also blacked their faces

* Kilts.

and painted themselves with vermilion and turmeric, which latter gave them a most demoniacal look. After executing a very slow dance in the usual perfect time, they suddenly divested themselves of all their tappa and flowers and piled their clubs and spears, and this part of the performance was over. Then came an interminable procession of women, each bearing a mat—I believe a thousand in all—which were also piled in the middle of the rara. Then the same number of men, each with a root of yangona, a wisp of hybiscus fibre, and a polished cocoa-nut cup. These were also piled. After this the most enormous quantity of ordinary food—pigs roasted, turtles, a shark, lobsters, crabs, and heaps of other things. All this brought us on to lunch-time, after which we went back to see the things divided. There was nothing remarkable in this except the way in which the Thakaundrove men received their portion. In consequence of an old insult offered by the Thakaundrove men to one of their gods, any man from there on meeting a Bau man is supposed to crawl on all-fours and squeak like a rat. The circumstances of the insult were, I believe, roughly as follows:—A Thakaundrove god was taking his airing in his canoe, when he was capsised, and in order to swim ashore more easily assumed the form of a rat. Much to his disgust, however, on reaching land, he was entirely repudiated by his own people—as it seems to me, not unnaturally—and accordingly went

to Bau, where he received every mark of attention. On this account a Thakaundrove man nowadays is supposed to squeak like a rat and go on all-fours when he sees a Bau man; even a high chief would do so to a low caste Bau man, though the latter, if sensible, would keep out of his way. This tradition is kept up to a certain extent, so that when the Thakaundrove men received their present of food at Bau they did so with every mark of dejection. After the Bau ceremony, of which we only saw three days, and which lasts three weeks, the Governor and all his party, except myself, walked overland to Rewa. I took the barge and met him there. We then attempted to get out of the river to go to Suva, where we were to pick up the *Emerald*. After spending two hours on the mud flats trying to get out, we finally effected this.

CHAPTER V.

ROTUMAH AND WALLIS ISLAND.

EARLY in December 1879, Romilly proceeded with Sir Arthur Gordon on board H.M.S. *Emerald* to the island of Rotumah, the inhabitants of which had petitioned to be annexed to Great Britain. Here he joined Mr. Arthur Gordon, who had been sent on a month previously to assist with his advice in the administration of the affairs of the island, until such time as the Home Government's reply to the petition should be received. During their stay on the island a murder was committed by an Australian half-caste who had accompanied Mr. Gordon as his interpreter, and it became necessary to send the prisoner back to Fiji for trial. A small twenty-ton cutter bound for Fiji happened soon afterwards to be at anchor off the island, so it was arranged to send the interpreter in her, under charge of the captain, and Romilly, being anxious to return to Fiji, decided to accompany him. The voyage proved a very adventurous one, and instead of taking three weeks, as it should have done, took nearly three months. The events of the voyage, including the

escape and subsequent re-capture of the prisoner in Wallis Island, have already been described by Romilly in a little book called "A True Story of the Western Pacific," published in 1882. To those, however, who have not seen the book, the account given in his letters of the voyage may be of interest.

ROTUMAH,
December 14, 1879.

. . . . I send this back to Fiji by the *Emerald*, in which ship I came with the Governor and K. We came in for a hurricane on the way here. They are very common about here, and are still more unpleasant on land than on sea. This is a most beautiful place, and well worthy of the name of Garden of the Pacific. Everything is exaggerated, trees, fruits, and shrubs being about twice the size they are in Fiji. The people are good enough in their way, but are always being made to fight by the missionaries. The prospect of annexation and our presence here prevents this at present. I have struck up a great friendship with a head chief, by name Alipati, *anglice* Albert, who speaks a little English, and says "I am one b——y good fellow." I have been here so short a time that I really have very little to tell you about the place. The great objection to it is the mosquitoes. They are in millions,

and although it sounds absurd to write about so small a matter, are an intense annoyance. When I shake my net in the night it really sounds like a covey of partridges getting up. The people here have houses up in the trees and built on scaffolding about forty feet high. Gordon and I are having one built for smoking-room and sleeping in. You will think this rather nice. They are like the New Britain and New Guinea houses. I have nothing more of any interest. Christmas is very near; a good deal hotter and more mosquitoey than yours. Though this place is not so very far from the line, the heat is very bearable. The temperature is a pretty even 90° in shade, which is not hot when you consider we are in latitude 12°. It is a good deal hotter, however, than 100° or 105° would be in a dry heat. We pay no attention to the sun, but are out in the hottest part of the day.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

ROTUMAH,
January 8, 1880.

On account of the hostility which existed between the Roman Catholics and Wesleyans, Gordon decided to have a big dance for the purpose of reuniting them. The missionaries did not allow them to speak to each other, and in fact for a long time past had



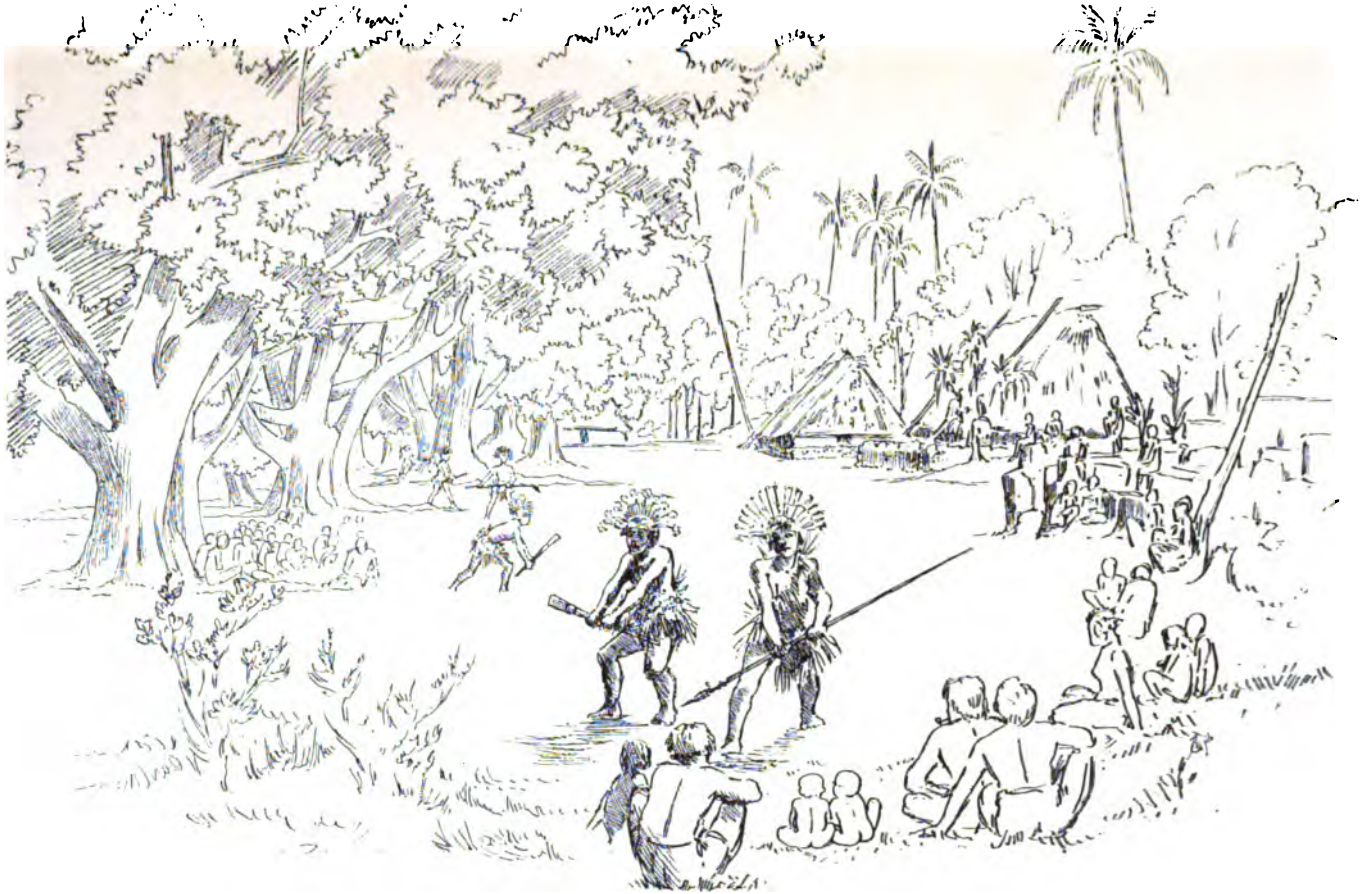
OUR SKY HOUSE

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G. *To face p. 42*

After having with great ease demolished and put to flight an imaginary enemy, they suddenly stopped, and immediately each man became as dignified and reserved as if it was impossible that he could have been making an ass of himself for the last half-hour. After the dance was over we got up races between picked champions of the tribes, and also between the Fotuna men, and then we tried to get up some wrestling. This, however, was such an awful offence in the eyes of the missionaries that it did not come off. Only one man came out to challenge, and his challenge was not taken up. As he was the biggest man in the island, it is open to question whether this fact did not influence them as much as the fear of invoking the wrath of the missionaries.

January 20.

Noatau and the other districts belonging to Marof had determined not to be cut out by Motusa, and so they had prepared a big war-dance and feast on as big a scale as they could. It was the most hopeless wet day, torrents of rain without a break. Notwithstanding this they determined to go through with it, and did so with an energy which must have been due to the delight they felt in being allowed to dance at all. As the dance was in every respect the same as the one at Motusa, except that there were more men, it needs no description. A lot of poor



From a drawing by
Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.

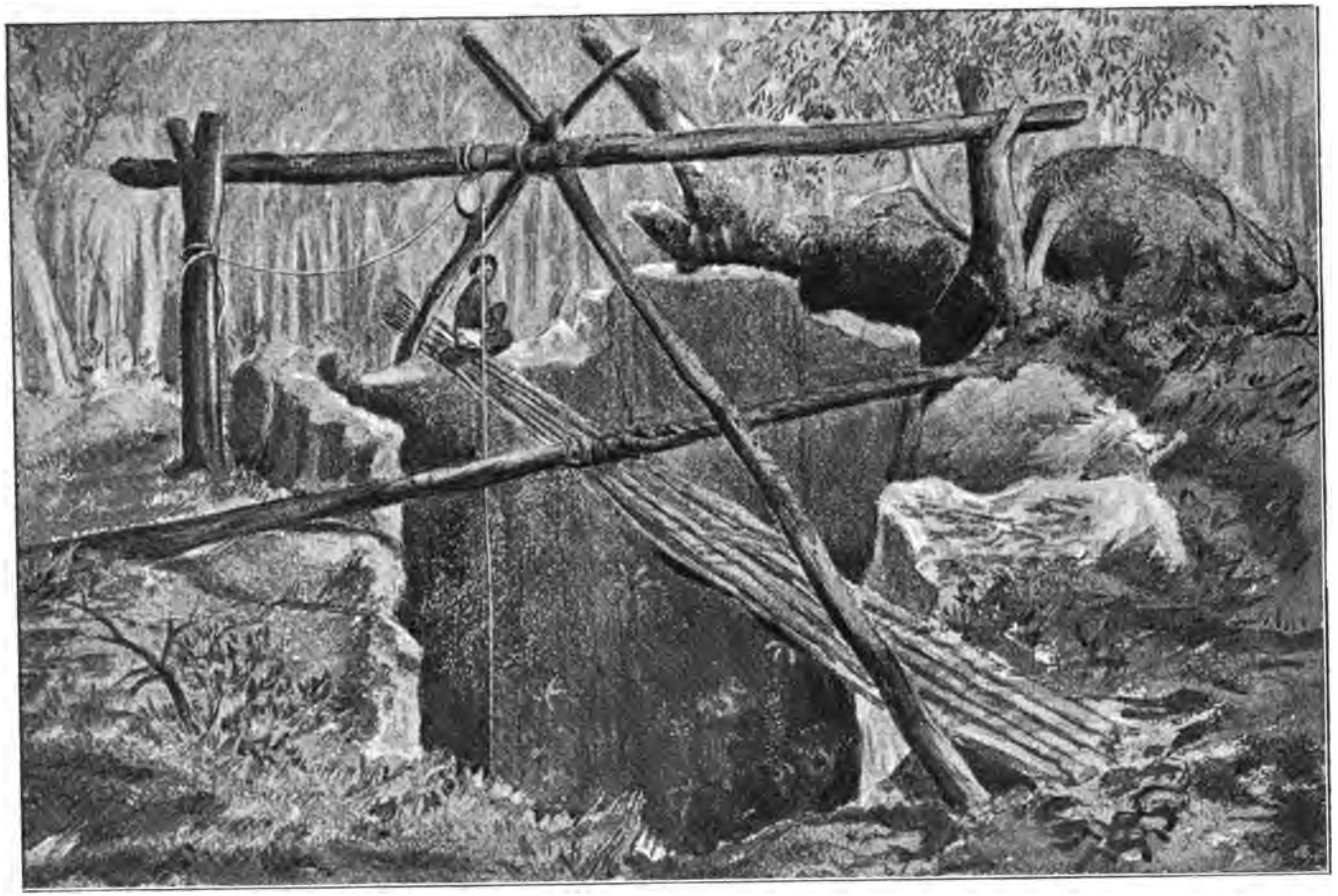
WAR DANCE IN ROTUMAH

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many bottles of beer were left, Suluo with a broad grin on his face said "only one." This was a great blow, but we determined to divide it carefully, and enjoy it as much as we could. Our stores are nearly all gone, the last pot of jam having also been consumed with the last bottle of beer. As far as food goes, we may be said only to exist for the few occasions on which pig's fry is forthcoming, that is to say, in joyful anticipation or sorrowful retrospection.

MOTUSA, ROTUMAH,
February 1, 1880.

When a chance will come for sending this letter I know not. I have been here two months and no ship has visited the place. We have just been enjoying a hurricane which has blown down all the bread-fruit and bananas, and many of the cocoa-nuts. We saved our house by a great fluke, by tying it to the ground by chains and ropes. Any number of native houses were blown away. All our stores have been finished for some time now, and we live just like the natives. Notwithstanding this, I rather like the place. Our difficulties in the matter of interpretation are immense. The interpreter Gordon brought was a half-caste—white father, and mother an Australian gin. Soon after my arrival he murdered a man in his sleep by chopping his head in half with an axe. We tried him, and you



From a drawing by
Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.

ENTRY TO THE CAVE AT MAMFIRI

To face p. 47

may imagine the difficulty of trying one's interpreter in a strange country. He has twice escaped from prison. The first time he got hold of my revolver, which he informed a woman he meant to shoot Gordon with for presuming to send him to prison. He also, unluckily for himself, got a bottle of gin, and we took him dead drunk. The second time he ran to our house at Noatau, apparently with the same intention, but was caught the same night. As you may suppose, we are anxious to get rid of him, but cannot do so till a ship comes in.

This island is a curious place in many ways. There are five caves we have explored, of which two were very remarkable. The entrance to the largest is through a hole eighty-four feet deep, in appearance exactly like an old well. At the bottom it opens out into domes and passages which go a long way underground, one dome especially being about eighty feet high. We were lowered by ropes which we got for the purpose. The rope, however, being quite new, began to twist at a great pace about half-way down, which made it difficult work holding on. The natives were in a great funk, as no one had ever been down before, and only three were induced to follow Gordon and myself. Among other things, it was supposed to be full of devils. The other cave has an entrance like a chimney, also about eighty feet deep, but so small that I stuck twice crawling down. At the bottom there was a dome, but apparently no passages. The other caves

are very large, but not in any way remarkable. The people are very much inclined to be civil, as they are anxious for annexation.

ROTUMAH, NOATAU,
February 2, 1880.

I carry on my letter of yesterday. It is rather an odd thing that having been here for two months without a ship, one should arrive the very day I began to write to you. I was very glad to get a voluminous mail by the *Thistle* cutter. She had been out in the hurricane that did so much damage here, and was almost in sight of land when she was caught and driven 300 miles to the eastward. The hurricane I was out in in the *Emerald*, as we hear from Fiji, has done immense damage there, and there has been a very large loss of life from a tidal wave. Whole towns have been blown away. Fires, too, seem to have broken out in most of the islands. The Governor in his letter describes all the vegetation as having the appearance of an English wood in autumn. While I am writing this I do not know whether I am to take charge of our murderer or not. The ship goes to Fiji *viâ* Wallis and Keppel Islands, so I hope not, as I should be a month at sea. I don't want to desert Gordon, but I must say I do want to get back to Fiji. I wish G. had come here to plant coffee ; the disease is eradicated.

But I do wish you could have induced him to plant cinchona, which as a coffee planter he would probably know about. I believe it pays about 700 per cent. here, and the rush has not come yet, though some Ceylon planters have heard of the good things in store for them, and each mail brings some. There is no risk about it, and it is very simple. I believe the quality of the Fiji bark is finer than any other known.

"THISTLE" CUTTER, WALLIS ISLAND,
February 28, 1880.

I suppose this letter will never be finished. Here I am at Wallis Island, having been three weeks at sea trying to do 300 miles. We have been having frightful weather, and drifted 300 miles to the eastward, narrowly escaping coming to grief on the island of Savai. To make it worse, our skipper is no sailor, and completely loses his head in any emergency. We have also exhausted our stores, though we can get greenstuff here. For the last week we have lived on ship's biscuit and mustard, and have been dependent for water on what we caught in the bight of the mainsail. Though it has been raining incessantly, the ship was rolling too much to catch much, and that was brackish with spray. These are some of the pleasures of yachting in the South Pacific during the hurricane months.

These Wallis islanders are curious people, but, unfortunately for them, completely under the control of the Roman Catholic missionaries. These missionaries actually put a "taboo" on their holding any intercourse with us, saying we were heretics, and had come in a devil-ship. When they heard, however, that I was staying with the Governor, they took the "taboo" off. The queen is a dear old thing, but a trifle avaricious. She is enormously fat, and keeps up a great show of royalty. I took my banjo down to the palace one day, and she listened for some time in a condescending sort of way till she could contain herself no longer, and began to dance a furious breakdown, supported by her son and maids-of-honour. I was very anxious to get some mats there, as they are very pretty, and Queen Amelia at once said she would sell me one. Next day it came with the message that the queen would like five dollars for it, but if she could not get that they were to take four; if I would not give four, she would take three; if they could not get three out of me, they were to take two; if I refused to give two, the mat was to be taken away and brought back next day, when one dollar was to be taken. Of course they did not know that I understood enough Tongan to know what they were saying, and so they only got one dollar. I thought it was hardly royal behaviour, however. The white trader here, being a heretic, is looked on as a devil. All the girls are shut up at nine o'clock in an enormous house, and all the men



HANIS PAU! MISA RAMALLI IA NIA LA SE FITI. ISA HANIS *PAU!!*

(*Translation*) Alas! Alas! Mr. Romilly is going away. I am *very* sorry!

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon. Esq., C.M.G.

To face p. 51

in another, to sleep. I was so much annoyed at the way the priests had treated us, that I went down to these houses with my banjo and played tunes to them half the night. The priests were simply rabid.

I forget now, as this letter has reached such an enormous length, whether I told you of my heart-rending farewell to the natives of Rotumah. As soon as we had settled that I must go to Fiji, to look after our prisoner and give evidence at his trial, I told the chiefs I was going to leave them. I believe every man and girl in the island came to Motusu, where I was staying, to say good-bye. They would sit in the house and stare at me, at intervals saying, "He is going away." If I had one I must have had a hundred offers of marriage made in perfect good faith, and even Albert was very anxious for me to marry his daughter. These I firmly but gently declined. But when I got into the boat to go off to the ship, the whole population swam off with me, and as many as could get into the boat caught hold of me and said I should not go, and very nearly tore me in pieces. Every chief in the island gave me a mat, and innumerable bottles of oil from the girls. It was most heart-breaking, and I felt inclined to howl. Our interpreter, by name Friday, said: "Don't you mind; these girls, sir, cry at anything just like children," while he was crying hard himself. All this shows I ought to be a very lovable person; but truth compels me to

say that girls and men I did not know by sight were crying as hard as any of them, merely because they saw other people crying. The emotions of these natives are all on the surface. It takes very little to make them cry, and still less to make them laugh; and though they are very sorry at the time, they very soon forget all about you.

From here we go to Keppel Island, and thence to Muafu, and if we ever reach Fiji, which I am doubtful of at present, I will write more from there. The equinox is in three weeks, and if we have another hurricane without plenty of sea-room, I don't think much of our chance of getting in with our present skipper and crew.

WALLIS,
March 7, 1880.

I must end this letter abruptly, as a most disagreeable thing has happened. The prisoner, who, thank goodness, was not under my care, but under the captain's, has escaped. We have scoured the country for him, but he has taken to the bush, and it may take a long time to find him. It seems that an old Line Island man knocked his irons off, and they both swam ashore. The captain had no watch kept, and the blame is entirely his. As the ship is chartered to go to Keppel Island, we have decided that it is better for her to go there and land her passenger, while I remain here to superintend the

search, as you can't trust natives to do a thing properly. The ship, as at present arranged, will call for me in about ten days; but it is possible at this time of year that she might have to put into Fiji instead, so I send this letter now on the chance. I think, however, she will probably come back for me, in which case I will add a postscript. It is a great nuisance, but can't be helped. I am truly thankful Gordon made the captain responsible and not me, though I don't think I should have let him go.

I don't expect now to get back till the beginning of April, and so hope to get a treble mail from you on my arrival. You will have been a long time without a letter, but this one is long enough to make up.

WALLIS ISLAND,
March 8, 1880.

MY DEAR M.,—My motions are most erratic, hence my present address. I came here from Rotumah to give evidence against our interpreter there, who had, in a moment of mental aberration, cut a man's head in half while asleep.

We were to have gone on to Fiji to try him, but, alas! the captain and crew got drunk one night, and the prisoner was liberated by an old Line Island man and escaped. I am now left here to catch him

while the ship goes on to Keppel Island, and will pick me up again. It is rather fun on the whole, but my Wallis islanders are far from being brave, and if they see a man in the bush whom they suppose by any possibility might be him, they run like hares. However, I don't despair.

The old queen is great fun. I sometimes take the banjo down to the palace, and when I begin to play she tumbles about like a big india-rubber ball, while the maids-of-honour do likewise. There are some priests on the island, who try to instil the principles of religion into the natives: these latter I shock most horribly. They say I am a heretic and a devil, that I came in a devil-ship, and they forbid the natives to hold any intercourse with me. But I have only got to take the banjo into a house and the whole town assembles at once. They have got a big house here in which all the women sleep. Last night, after shutting-up time, I crawled off with the banjo, climbed on to the roof, and dropped into the middle of them. I sat there playing half the night, while the ladies performed a frantic hula-hula, or dance.

The priest turned up quite frantic in the middle of it, almost foaming at the mouth. I put a bland smile on my face, and said, "Amusez vous, Monsieur, ici point d'étiquette." This morning, I believe, there is a council of war going on as to what they will do.

Rotumah was also rather a nice place. Every

night we used to lie out on the verandah, while the twelve prettiest girls on the island used to fan us and make native cigarettes. The offers of marriage I had there were numerous, and some most alluring.

The priest has just paid me a visit, saying he will kindly look over my offence of last night. If you and K. were here we would get up a nigger performance for them. The chief musical instrument here is a human shin-bone and a kerosene tin; it produces what former visitors call a weird sort of sound, but what *I* call a fiendish din. I have a lovely stick for you, composed entirely of human bones and studded with teeth—a lovely thing to walk in the Park with.

March 13, 1880.

I have just caught my man; in fact, he gave himself up, the food in the bush not being to his liking. When my men saw him they cut like fun, to the number of about 200. Such is Wallis Island bravery. However, when I had tied him up, there was nothing they said they would not do to him. I have got him shut up in a house, where he is exhibited for ten cocoa-nuts a head. As we are likely to stay here some time before the ship comes back, I am thinking of teaching him one or two little tricks, and raising the price of admission.

On reading this letter over I find it more frivolous than I had meant it to be. Four small boys are told

off by the chief to scratch my head incessantly. I consent only as I should fall much in his estimation if I told them that I did not need it. A chief will perhaps have four women to scratch his head, while they in their turn have theirs scratched by their numerous offspring. The numerous offspring perhaps divide two or three small boys to do the same for them. To obviate the necessity of having any one to scratch the small boys, they have their heads shaved.

I finish rather abruptly, as a ship has come in bound for Sydney.

WALLIS ISLAND,
March 20, 1880.

As there is a chance of writing to Sydney, I send you a line that way. I sent a very long letter to Fiji about ten days ago, so I have not much to say now. I am very anxious to get to Fiji, as all sorts of things may have happened; and as I have caught my man, there is nothing to keep me here. I hope to be picked up by the Governor in the *Danae*, as I have written to him to that effect. We should then go on to Rotumah to hoist the British flag, then back to Fiji. I am sure all this time there are letters from the Commodore which want answering, but I can do nothing stuck on this place. There is a gay young widow on board the *Sirocco* (the ship this goes by), who was the wife of a celebrated

pirate, called "Bully Hayes." She has a large stock of yarns and is great fun. We had two whirlwinds here the other day, which was a new sight to me. One of them cut straight across the island, picking up houses, pigs, dogs, men, trees, and left a beautiful road through the bush, about twenty yards wide. The other passed over the sea, about a quarter of a mile off, and had the appearance of a large teacup sixty feet deep.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAGISTRATE.

THE *Thistle*, with Romilly and his prisoner on board, arrived at last at Fiji on the 17th April, when they found themselves reported lost, H.M.S. *Danae* having been despatched to obtain news of them.

The day after his arrival he was given his first definite official position, being then at the age of twenty-four, appointed Stipendiary Magistrate for the important district of Nandronga, in Viti Levu, the largest island of the Fiji group.

Before entering upon his new duties, however, it appears from the extract from his Journal which follows, that he accompanied his chief, Sir Arthur, on foot to the mountains of Fiji to attend a native meeting at a place called Nandrau, where they arrived on the 5th of May 1880, after a four days' walk. As Romilly had no special work to do here, he and a friend started the day after the meeting, and walked thirty miles through the mountains to the Police Camp, which had been established in a central position in order to quell immediately any disturb-

ance that might arise. He left the camp on the 18th of May, and rode in two days to his head-quarters at Thuvu, in the district of Nandronga. I find the following note of his: "Remained in my district, visiting every coast and mountain chief, till July 16th." The letters in this chapter contain some account of his magisterial experiences, which, as will be seen, differ somewhat from those of Bow Street or the Guildhall.

NASOVA, FIJI,
April 18, 1880.

. . . . I found the Governor very anxious as to what had become of me, as the *Thistle* had for a long time previous to my arrival been reported lost, and he had actually sent a man-of-war, the *Danae*, to try and find out something about me. However, here I am at last, and very glad of it I am, as I had a most wretched time on board the cutter. Another change in my plans, and this time a definite one, has taken place. I am going with Le Hunte and H.E. up to Tholo—that is, the devil country—for a meeting there. Thence I go to Nandronga, about forty miles off, as Magistrate and Commissioner. I am only to be there a short time, perhaps three months. I have very high jurisdiction indeed there, part of my district not being under the Supreme Court. The Governor gave me my choice of three districts,

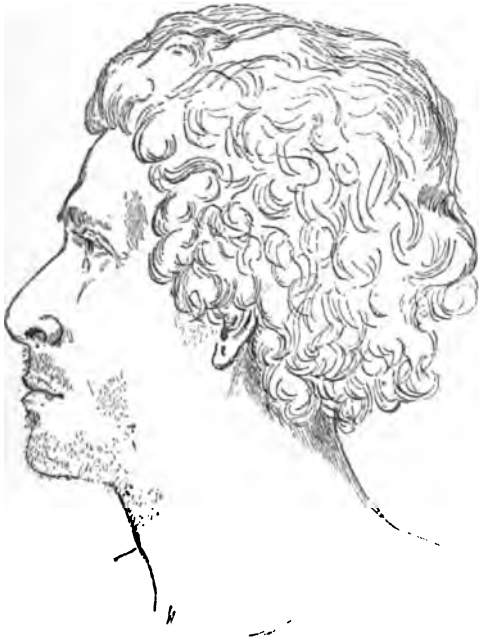
Vanua Levu, Kandavu, and Nandronga, saying at the same time that he would rather I went to Nandronga, as the natives were much inclined to have rows with the whites, and saying he wanted a firm man there. There is a compliment for you! I have one of the twelve Rokos* under me, Roko Tui Nandronga, a very good fellow. If you have read the "Little War,"† you will know his name.

I have been complimented very much, both by Sir Arthur Gordon and the Chief Justice, on my proceedings at Wallis, for the recovery of my murderer. Thank goodness, I have done with him, unless the Governor in a fit of sudden generosity appoints me High Sheriff to perform the last sentence of the law upon him.

I am now busy getting servants, stores, &c., to take to my district. I have got a capital darkie cook and general factotum. I asked him if he was any good at carpentering, and he said, "Oh, yes. I am a very good carpenter." I said, "What can you make?" To which he replied, "I know how to make a good coffin, sir." It sent a cold shiver down my back. He refused a good offer from the Levuka Hotel, of £12 a month, to come with me for £3 a month; for what reason, do you think? Because I was able to spar with him, and he was a celebrated

* *I.e.*, Native Chiefs of Provinces.—ED.

† An account of the disturbances in the mountains of Viti Levu in 1876, privately printed.—ED.



"ALIPATI"
A CHIEF OF ROTUMAH

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.



"MERISEI"
ALIPATI'S DAUGHTER

To face p. 61

boxer in 'Frisco. As he was the head cook at the Central Pacific Restaurant in 'Frisco, I think I may consider myself lucky.

I enclose a letter from Albert,* written to me by Gordon at his dictation.

I will write more when the mail comes in.

MOTUSA,

February 21, 1880.

MR. ROMALI,—Me sorry you—too much—me sorry Mr. Godin you leave him alone.

The time you going away, Mr. Godin he stop Motusa. Then Mr. Godin he come in to Motusa. Me and all fam he sorry begin again—me see Mr. Godin alone. All people in Motusa the time Mr. Godin, Mr. Romilly he stop here both very glad. Now Mr. Godin he stop alone—he sorry too much.

That is all me say—he put, How is Tom. He stop good? He run away Wallis Island? Speak bad?

THATI ALL.

me ALIPATI.

Suppose you see my son Levuka you speak him. Come in Rotumah.

* Alias "Alipati," the Rotumah chief mentioned in the letter of December 14, 1879.—ED.

April 23, 1880.

Each day here produces some change. I have just received a most kind letter from the Commodore, and a telegram from Governor Weld offering me his private secretaryship at Singapore. He has just got his appointment to the Straits Settlements from Tasmania. The prospect was most alluring, as I believe both he and the ladies of his family are charming. This telegram gave me an opportunity, I might have waited a long time for, of asking H.E. for a definite answer as to whether my prospects were as good with him as elsewhere, telling him at the same time that if they were I would rather stay with him than go to Singapore. He said, "Are you quite sure of that?" and on telling him I was, he said, "I certainly mean to make you my private secretary." This is not to take place, however, for four months, when we expect our new yacht out. She has just been bought from Lord Eglinton, is called the *Cruiser*, and is 480 tons. Arthur Gordon is to be appointed first Commissioner, and will cruise round the islands in her, a delightful existence which the Governor hinted to me I might share. Though I am to be his P. S., I don't expect much P. S. work to do, as there will probably be another to do the red-tape business, while I expect to be constantly away on some of the rough jobs of which he has a constant supply on hand. Meanwhile my Commissionership will last

till I am made P. S. on a salary of £300 a year. . . .

It is not improbable that I may be sent shortly to investigate a murder case in New Hebrides, at an island called Aoba. They have the reputation there of being among the fiercest cannibals in the Pacific. Of course I should go in a man-of-war, and therefore safely. The mail does not come in for a week, owing to the burning of the *City of Sydney*, but I will write more when it does come in.

April 26, 1880.

Mail just arrived. The *Danae* has just come in, having pursued me by the Governor's orders to Keppel's and Wallis', and finding an order at Samoa from the Commodore to pursue me once more to Rotumah and forcibly carry me to Sydney to join Weld. I think old Purvis, the skipper, has been cursing me for the last month. We have a Church of England missionary staying with us on his way to join the Bishop in Norfolk Island. He has been for the last thirteen years in the Solomons, and is a really fine fellow. His stories and general account of himself are most interesting. Almost immediately after his departure we got news of white men being murdered. Of course there is always a senseless outcry after one of these murders, about sending men-of-war to shoot and hang

natives. It only increases the number of murders, as their law is blood for blood. Also I cannot see that the Government is bound to protect men who, merely for their own gain, go with their eyes open to a country like the Solomons.

NASOVA,

April 18, 1880.

MY DEAR L.,—Tell —— I feel for him as a brother. I think it doubtful whether he would entertain the same feeling for me if he saw me in my usual costume of blue paint and turmeric; but I assure you I always use the *very best.*

"When a person," quotes the Fiji *Times*, "of mean capacity" (with all my expensive education, too!) "is placed in a position manifestly above him, he cannot expect *every* one to entertain the same lofty opinion of him as he manifestly does of himself."

My dear child, your little brother has been noticed in print at last! This occurring on the day that the news of your entering the "blessed state" reached me, the shock was too great to be supported by a constitution much debilitated by living for two months on shark's liver and Colman's mustard ("the cheapest and best").

NASOVA, FIJI,
April 24, 1880.

MY DEAR S.,—I was very glad to get your letter. You are the only person who tells me anything about home sport. As you may know, there is very poor shooting here, only ducks and golden plover. We get an occasional day's wild cattle shooting—that is to say, whenever a chief gets hoisted over his own fence, either Knollys or I get an urgent appeal to come and wipe out the insult. It is, however, but poor sport. Fishing is really the only good sport, and in places it is first-rate. I have taken your rod, and got a fish every cast, varying in size from two to fifteen pounds. In deep water, towing a line, I have caught them up to eighty pounds. They are called sanka here, and are very like the salmo ferox in shape, and are tremendously strong. It is, on the whole, most trying to the temper, as they almost invariably, after a quarter of an hour's play, sulk, and then it is all up with your line on the coral at the bottom. On board the cutter,* too, I distinguished myself in the fishing line. We had been living for some days on shark, all our other food being exhausted, when one morning we sighted a reef about two miles off. Before we passed it the wind fell off, and we had a dead calm. Accordingly, I went off in the boat, and got into the dead water

On his way back from Wallis Island with his prisoner.—ED.

under the lea of the reef. After about two hours' fishing the boat was cram full of sanka and bonitoes, the great triumph being an albecore weighing 127 lbs. We salted them down, and got enough food to bring us into Levuka.

I believe I have discovered a new bird to science, which I send you to have stuffed, to give to the British Museum or to chuck into the dust-heap, whichever you like. I heard of it at a small island called "Niuafu," or Hope Island on the chart, and got a cunning old native to take me out. We found a young bird about half grown and twenty eggs. He looked to me very like a young grouse, but the remarkable thing is, the egg the bird lays is bigger than her body;* the full-grown bird being the size of a small partridge, while the egg is nearly the size of a turkey's egg. I hatched one egg out of the lot. The bird is a Megapode, and the eggs hatch themselves. There is also one island in the Solomons where the bird is found, but there is some superstition attached to them, and a native or white man who molested them would be clubbed. A naturalist called at Hope Island, but could not get one. The bird disappears for five months in the year, and now you know as much about it as I do.

* This statement is slightly metaphorical, but it is the fact that the egg sent home was bigger than the half-grown but fully fledged bird that accompanied it. Both were sent to the British Museum, where I believe they now are.—Ed.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

May 1st.—His Excellency, Le Hunte, and myself left Nasova for a trip to the mountains there, to attend a native meeting at Nandrau. We called in at Navatu, where Williamson and the Lands Commission were sitting, and slept the night. Next day we went on the entrance to the Ba River in the *Porpoise*, where the barge was waiting, and we pulled up in her to the Roko's town.

The Roko is a good old fellow, with two little children, who were not a bit afraid of one, as Fiji children usually are. He has got a musical box and a sewing machine in his house. We slept the night there, and then started on our walk up the Ba River.

The last white man's house is about six miles above the town, and is the house where the Burns family were murdered. The upper waters of the Ba River are comparatively unknown. The first ten miles was over undulating plains covered with coarse grass 5 feet high. Our forty carriers made a picturesque sight winding along in single file. We soon left the plains and began to ascend. We passed through a town, the name of which I forget, where were the remains of a sort of sacrificial enclosure, with seats at intervals for the swells. Human flesh was the only food anything accounted of here. These people at last became so obnoxious to their neighbours that one fine morning the tribes round about came up and clubbed the lot of them.

Fijian paths are most heartbreaking. Instead of skirting the shoulders of the hills and rising gradually, they go slap at them, straight up and down, always going over the very highest peaks. Of course the reason is obvious. It was absolutely necessary, in the state of Fijian society when the paths were made, to get a clear view of the surrounding country as often as possible, in order to guard against ambuscades. After a hard pull up a hill it is most annoying to have to go straight down again. It is also necessary to swim the river perhaps a dozen times in the day. This, however, is rather pleasant than otherwise.

Two ladies—Miss D.'s by name—got up under Le Hunte's charge, but they must have had hard work. We slept the first night at a little town in a valley, all the last part of the walk being through most beautiful scenery. The town was surrounded by bamboos—the first we had seen—and shaddock trees. Of course at all the towns we stopped at, the Governor had presents of food or "mangitis" given to him. These should always be allowed for in Fijian travelling, as they throw out one's calculations very much. Next day, after a very pretty but steep walk of ten miles, we got to a very small town of four houses. The Governor and I slept there, while Le Hunte went straight on to Nandrau, about ten miles further. Next day—Wednesday the 5th—we walked on to Nandrau, where the meeting of mountain chiefs was to be held. We got into the Government road from

camp to Nandrau almost immediately, after which all was plain sailing. All the chiefs and their followings were drawn up squatting on the ground to receive H.E. After this we went to Buli Nandrau's house. This is a very fine specimen of mountain architecture, though very dark. The old devil Bure, straight opposite, is being allowed to fall into decay, which is a pity. The town is situated in a deep valley, the cliffs rising perpendicularly 600 or 700 feet all round it. The sun is shut off for half the day; therefore it is very cool. The Singatoka runs through it. We found Le Hunte, Knollys, Marriott, and Browne already installed on our arrival. On Friday, after much pig-eating, the meeting began about 11 A.M. Of course the ceremony began with yangona drinking, and then the Governor made a speech, after which Marriott and I departed.

THUVU,

May 26, 1880.

. . . . My district is an enormous one, and I am constantly employed in the operation of trying to be in four places at once. However, I like the life, as we are riding from sunrise to sunset. I suppose, in years to come, we may be more flourishing, but at present there is no capital in the country, and the pioneers have shared the usual fate of pioneers. The white men in Fiji are the

most miserable lot I ever saw. In travelling I never put up at a white man's house, as I feel he can't afford even to give me native food. In Australia the poorest man is glad to see you. In my district there is only *one* man with a decent house, and who lives like a white man. My house is a native house, and is far more comfortable than any European house. It is one of the best houses in Fiji. The sinnet work inside is beautiful. There is a lovely view from it, and altogether it is everything I could wish. Many of my white settlers are of the decayed gentleman type—officers in the army, &c.—and are awful blackguards. As a new man, they all try to humbug me to any extent.

THUVU,

May 29, 1880.

MY DEAR L.,—I have a large stock of girls on my hands just now, for whom I have to find suitable husbands and also act as parson. One of my elderly ladies fancies that she is married both to the Governor and myself. I need not say she is mad. She also firmly believes she is the mail steamer, and walks about all night whistling. Last night she woke me up to deliver the mail, which consisted of a lot of banana leaves tied up with sinnet. I gave the chiefs of my district a dinner on the night of the Queen's birthday, requesting each man to bring his own cup and knife

and fork. I made them a speech, describing Her Majesty as a lady who wore a silk dress every day, also who never appeared in public without her shoes and stockings. This impressed them very much. I also implied that I was consulted on all important affairs of State. The Buli then made a speech, in which he said that white man's food was sweet to the belly, affectionately patting that organ at the same time. This was a treat, he said, the like of which had never been seen at Nandronga. We had a great dance afterwards, which went on till morning.

I buy lots of native curiosities here, and this is the formula invariably pursued. A man comes in and says, "For the great love he bears the Turaga ni Lewa (chief of the laws), he wishes to make him a present of a club."* The Turaga ni Lewa says he cannot accept a present, and would not insult the man by offering to buy it. He then appears to ponder for a while, and suddenly exclaims that he *will* accept the present, but insists on making the man a present of a shilling in return. The man

* "The following letter found amongst my brother's papers gives a rather amusing instance of a native's notion of disinterested generosity :

'NA VOCI-NADI, *August* 28, 1878.

'ROMILLY, Esq.,

'Solomoni sends you a club as a present, and his love.

'Yours, &c., &c.,

(for SOLOMONI), G. R.

'P.S.—He says he wants a pair of trousers, *woollen*.'"—ED.

goes away delighted, as of course he has not *sold* the club.

The following extract from the Journal may be inserted here on account of the description given of the "Mekis," or Fijian *ballets d'action*, which followed the Queen's birthday dinner given in the last letter.

FIJI, THUVU, *May* 24.

Being the Queen's birthday, I thought I would give a dinner, and accordingly issued invitations to Buli Thuvu, the "turaga ni offisa," and the "turaga ni lewa," requesting them to bring their own knives and forks and cups. This, however, they did not do, and accordingly three knives and two forks and four glasses had to be divided among six people. I told them we should have to eat half English fashion and half Fiji fashion, a request they complied with by eating entirely Fiji fashion. The dinner, considering our resources, was most "recherché." Altogether a most unusual dinner for Fiji. The Queen's health was drunk in beer after dinner. Some big "mekis" had been got up, which were very dramatic; in one about a hundred men formed themselves into a snake, with a head made of tappa and a grass tail. This snake, which was found by a small boy, wriggled about the town for some time, till all of a sudden a man rushed out of the house with a club

and broke its back. After a few violent struggles, the snake died, and the small boy at once got into a great rage, running about and asking every one if they had killed his snake. For a long while no one took any notice of him, till at last a lame man got up from the crowd and said, "I killed your snake because he bit my leg," at the same time showing his game leg. Of course this was a great joke, and produced shrieks. The small boy, however, far from being pacified, insisted on having his snake brought to life, and after some time the man consented to try. In this, however, he only succeeded partially, as the snake, after a long charm had been pronounced over him, jumped up in a dozen different pieces, each of which chased the lame man, till they finally killed him. Another "meki" which also produced shrieks of laughter, was begun by two men who began to dance by themselves. Almost immediately two more men rushed up and cried, "Stop, you are dancing the wrong 'meki'; you must dance mine." The band immediately struck up the old one, and the two new men began to dance, utterly ignorant of the fact that the tune had not been changed. This joke was repeated till about a hundred men had joined in, all under the impression that each was dancing his own "meki."

June 8th.—Last Monday we started to walk to Serua, about fifty miles distant. I had ten men carrying, who did not approve of our early start, and tried to show their displeasure by walking very

slowly, and sitting down very often. I hit upon a plan, however, which made them keep in front of us. Whenever I saw two of them sitting down I began to collect geological specimens and lumps of coral, which I gave them to carry. They took care after this never to get too close to me.

Serua is a picturesque town built on a small island, something like Bau. I had six cases to try. The native magistrate, Gio, is certainly not much help in this respect. Whenever I ask him what he thinks of a case, he replies by pitching into the man who is being tried, asking him what he did it for, and if he did not know it was very wrong, &c., apparently forgetting that till proved guilty the prisoner must be considered innocent. This Gio, when trying a case, never admits a plea of not guilty, and as he has no notion of trying a case, he bullies or frightens the man till he pleads guilty, upon which he proceeds with infinite relish to pronounce twice as heavy a sentence as he has power to do. He has his own ideas on the subject of punishments. Rape is a trifling *faux pas* in his eyes, while stealing a pig is the *ne plus ultra* of wickedness. Quite illegally, he tried a man for the first offence, and fined him a shilling; a poor wretch who stole a pig, however, got six months.*

* It ought to be mentioned that Ratu Gio's mode of procedure seems to have been exceptional, and does not give an accurate idea of the administration of justice by native magistrates, some of whom, as I have Lord Stanmore's authority for saying, were exceedingly shrewd and sensible men.—ED.

THUVU,
June 8, 1880.

MY DEAR G.,—It takes me nearly as long to answer letters from here as from Rotumah. The metropolis is some two hundred miles away and communication irregular. Talking about the metropolis, just before I left that village a Church of England parson (a rarity here) preached a sermon which was amusing, as it was an old one, and he had evidently preached it last in some big city. He said: "When I survey this vast city, with its teeming thousands and tens of thousands, when I hear complaints on every side of the rigour of the climate and the sterility of the soil, I feel that there is indeed no field for enterprise for you." The Levuka audience burst into a shriek of unseemly merriment. It turned out to be a sermon he had preached before leaving home, advising people to emigrate. We never let him hear the end of it while he stayed at Nasova.

In two days from this a ball is being given in my honour—that is to say, all the people in my district are to come and dance dances and eat yams.

THUVU,
June 8, 1880.

It may interest you to know what is the nature of my work, and how I occupy my time. In the

first place, I have a district comprising 70 miles of coast, and a slice of the Tholo or mountain district. I am entirely dependent on two horses, and my interpreter on one. As they are always getting lame, we generally have to walk. We have just got back from a hundred miles' walk, taking five days, one of which was spent holding a court. This is pretty good going in this country. Except in one part of my district, I have to do the ordinary magistrate's work, committing for trial at the Supreme Court, &c. Most of my cases are settled in a summary manner, two years' imprisonment being the heaviest sentence I can give. A part of the district, however, called Serua, is in what is called the prescribed district—that is to say, excepted from the operation of English law. Here I am not under the Supreme Court, and may try for any offence, and punish in the most summary manner. Though I think it unlikely that another rising will take place, it is not every one's opinion, and there is an armed force established in the very middle of the district within a day's march of any part of it. Of course there are many chiefs who secretly hate the Government and the new religion; but all the big ones are on the Government side, and confess that they are better off now than they ever were. As the sale of arms and ammunition is entirely prohibited in this district, it is difficult to see how a rising could take place. My great difficulty is to keep the whites and natives on friendly terms.

Some of the whites here are greater savages than the natives. Only the other day I had a case which may give you an idea of the sort of thing. A chief had made his men build a fence for a white man. When it was finished, the white man refused to pay for it. Accordingly, while he was out at work, the chief walked into his house and carried off a child, telling the white woman that it should be clubbed if he was not paid. Of course he gave the child up, and the white man paid him. But these are the sort of things which cause ill feeling. Another part of my work is to make roads. I appoint each town a certain amount of work to do towards it, and engineer it myself. I have also to marry any natives whom the native teachers refuse to marry. Then there are lots of other things to do in finding labourers for planters, &c. Altogether there is enough work for three magistrates. I get time, however, for shooting and fishing, which there is plenty of. I don't expect to be here more than three months longer, though I shall be sorry to leave, as I like the work.

THUVU,
June 12, 1880.

A line to say that I shall probably miss the next mail. I am called away on a ride to the far end of my district, to investigate some murder cases

which have taken place. As I shall possibly not be back for a month, I shall miss the next steamer. I have just got a letter from H.E. saying that he does not mean to keep me here much longer, as he is aware that the place is not an earthly paradise. That means, of course, that I am sure to start my P. S. work. He is also complimentary as to my work here. The positions I am placed in are sometimes rather absurd. The Roko, theoretically, is a bigger man than I am; practically, I have constantly to interfere to check oppressive proceedings on his part. If the authorities at Nasova take my view of the case, I get complimented; if they don't, I should get reprimanded and generally pitched into. At present, however, I have had the compliments without the reprimands.

A Stipendiary Magistrate does not inspire much affection in his district. The chiefs hate him for interfering with them; the natives hate him because the chiefs do; and the whites don't love him unless he agrees to the most preposterous demands for "doing" the natives. Outwardly, however, he is treated with the most cringing humility.

No more at present.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.

AFTER the magisterial expedition referred to in the last letter, some account of which will be found in the extracts given from his journal, Romilly returned to Levuka, the seat of Government; and on the 26th of July 1880 was gazetted one of H.E. Sir Arthur Gordon's private secretaries. On the 2nd of August he accompanied his chief to the Island of Taviuni to instal one Ratu Lala as Roko Tui of Thakaudrove, and on the 21st of the same month he sailed with Sir Arthur in H.M.S. *Emerald* for Samoa, where they arrived on the 24th, the object being to exchange the ratifications of the Samoan treaty with King Malietoa. After this business was completed they returned to Fiji.

[EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.]

July 13th.—Started on a tour of courts right round the district, a week earlier than I had intended on account of a murder case at Ba. We slept the first

night at Maro. Next day we rode to Nandi, about 35 miles over the hills. I was very anxious to stay there as short a time as possible, as the horses get sores and "thika" at once there. The horses belonging to the planters there are a disgusting sight. The constant "thika" they suffer from gradually scalds all the flesh off their faces down to the bone. Their legs are covered with swellings, which vary from the size of a man's fist to that of a football. These swellings are then cut off, and form enormous sores which never heal. The natives ascribe it to the seed of a certain sort of grass. Unluckily, I was kept a week there, as there was a lot of work, and of course our horses got "thika." H. had advised us to wear veils there, but we adopted the preventive used by the whites instead, viz., washing our eyes with tea-water. "Thika" is a sort of ophthalmia, and intensely painful. There are eight or nine whites settled at Nandi, and in intervals of work we amused ourselves cattle-riding, &c. We had a good day's duck-shooting, too, riding from one lagoon to another. The whites are a decidedly rough lot there, but very much inclined to be civil.

Having finished my work at Nandi, we started in company with B., Mrs. B., and her sister, a Miss R., to ride to Ba, a distance of 40 miles. The roads were so bad, however that we only got to Taurau, about 10 miles short of Ba. The road was frightful, the horses constantly tumbling through the bridges into muddy creeks, fiom which they had to be dug

out. They got so frightened at last that when we came to a bridge it was necessary for ten or twelve men to haul on a tether rope at their heads, and for a man to go behind them with a stock-whip. It usually happened that the bridge collapsed before all the horses got across, and then the remainder had to be hauled across somehow. From there, after finishing all the business, we rode on to Tavua, about 20 miles, and a most frightful road; most of the way up a watercourse with huge boulders, which had got to be got over somehow. It was a case of tether-rope and stock-whip almost the whole way. We stayed at Tavua one day with one Millar, and then rode or rather climbed back to Ba. Of course the roads were worse than ever coming home, as the bridges had not been repaired, notwithstanding my instructions that they should be. Every creek took us an hour to get over, but we got to Nandi at last. An incident on the way home was rather amusing. We had arranged a luncheon place about half way, and when we got there we lighted a fire and prepared to cook some food. We had one tin of minced collops left, and I told a prisoner to cook it while we bathed. Instead of making a hole in the tin he put it on just as it was. When we came up there were about twenty men round the fire looking at the tin, which they said had a devil inside it. It was certainly jumping about in a remarkable way, as there was a small escape of steam in the lid. Just as I was telling them to take it off as it would burst,

there was a loud explosion, and the twenty men fell flat on their backs, many of them rolling into the creek in their fright. They were plastered all over with boiling minced collops. We lost our dinner, but had a good laugh instead. The men scraped each other down with split bamboos which they eagerly sucked afterwards. We got home with no further adventures.

July 16th.—Got a note from Knollys telling me to go up to Camp and ride down to Ba, from thence to go with him and Marriott to Levuka. This plan was upset by an attack of fever, but I managed to ride to Ba by the coast. There I waited a day, and that evening we sailed from the Roko's town down the river. All went well till about midnight, at which time we were going about five knots close hauled with a strong squally land breeze. All of a sudden a tremendous smash, and the unpleasant knowledge that we were "piled" with a falling tide. We made the best of it, however, and spent a most disagreeable night in the rain. Next morning we managed to get her off, not much damaged, with only the loss of a good many sheets of copper. Our journey to Levuka took four days, beating all the time against a strong head trade, and camping at night whenever we found a place. We found the Governor and Browne all alone.

July 26th.—I was gazetted private secretary. In the morning the Commodore, whom we had been expecting, turned up in the *Wolverene*. Next day

we organised a shooting expedition for the purpose of demolishing the "bulumakous," and departed to Moturiki armed to the teeth. We spent the first day telling each other what we meant to do on the morrow, and how the bulls would go down before our Sniders. We observed smiles on the faces of the natives, who however made no remarks. Next morning we were up at daybreak, and after a hurried breakfast began to arm ourselves till we all bristled with weapons. Just as we were starting the Buli came in looking very sheepish, and began to talk on indifferent subjects till at last we asked him what he thought of our prospect of sport. For a long time he was silent, till at last the truth, which the common people had been afraid to tell us, came out; "the bulumakous did not exist." One of them had taken the liberty of hoisting the Buli over his own fence, and he had asked the Bau people to destroy them, which they had done. We all looked at each other and then roared, as our appearance was most warlike. The Buli, seeing that we looked upon it as a joke, began to laugh too, and evidently thought himself a very great man for having dared to tell us.

August 2nd.—The Governor, K., and myself left in the *Wolverene* for Taviuni to instal Ratu Lala as Roko Tui Thakaudrove in place of his father Tui Thakaun. The ceremony, which no doubt meant a great deal, conveyed no particular idea to my mind except that it was an opportunity for drinking Fiji

grog and eating Fiji pig which should not be missed. The Governor's portion of the feast consisted of many piles of yam, divers turtle, and many pigs. We had a very solemn brew of Fiji grog, at which K.H., who had come with the *Wolverene*, assisted. It was very green and very strong, and he evidently did not like it a bit. The day was very wet, seven inches falling in the twenty-four hours. I personally was glad to get on board again. On our way to Taviuni we had an accident which might have been, and looked at the time as if it was going to be, serious. We were off Goro in unsurveyed waters, and under the impression that we were five miles from the land. K. and I and one of the lieutenants were smoking a pipe under the poop preparatory to turning in for the night when suddenly we all three measured our lengths on the deck. T., the lieutenant, remarked "She's piled"; we said, "She is," and went on smoking. The lower decks were cleared at once, and though the men were utterly ignorant of anything except that the ship had struck, there was no noise or confusion. The cutter was lowered at once, and trying to pull round the bows of the vessel also struck the coral, while out of the stern chains we had seventeen fathoms. Things began to look bad, as the carpenter reported thirteen inches of water in the hold, and the engines going full speed astern, failed to move her. The hand pumps were manned, but the leak gained on them at the rate of an inch a minute. The guns were all then got aft, a work of tremendous

difficulty, but which was successfully and quietly done, unfortunately with no result. Every man in the ship was then ordered on to the poop to jump together, the Commander giving them the time. The water was all this time pouring in in a stream the size of a man's body. After the jumping had been tried unsuccessfully, we tried to make the ship roll by all running over from the port to the starboard side and back again. No result had hitherto been achieved, but the leak was being kept under by steam pumps. The boats were then all lowered, and the mizzen backed and at last she slipped off into deep water. From that time till we got into Levuka the steam pumps had to be kept going. We found out afterwards that ten yards more to the northward and we should have had deep water.

NASOVA,
August 10, 1880.

MY DEAR M.— I had an amusing adventure the other day, in which I figured as the preserver of a young and lovely female. The young and lovely female was returning to her husband in a distant district. I was escorting and looking after her on the road. We had to cross a native bridge made of cocoa-nut trees, and as we were riding over it the whole structure collapsed.

Scene 2 opens, discovering young and lovely female and tall dark Englishman (H. R.) clasped in each other's arms, sinking into unknown depths of mud. Two valuable horses are also disappearing. Suddenly an excited figure, in the person of my interpreter, appears brandishing a tether-rope, which he makes fast to a tree, and the other end of which he throws to me. Some natives arriving at that moment, the young and lovely female and the tall dark Englishman are drawn out of the mud with a pop like a gigantic soda-water cork, still firmly clasped in each other's arms. We were scraped down with a bamboo by the natives, and resumed our journey. I could tell you many anecdotes of a like nature, but have no more time.

NASOVA,

August 20, 1880.

Of course, even while I write this it is stale news to tell you we are going, almost at once, to New Zealand. I, however, get for a short time a very dismal promotion—*i.e.*, Commissionership at Rotumah. It is, as I told you, a very good thing *to have been*, being a really important position. H.E. has promised to relieve me by November, though I can't think whom he will send. I think very likely he will not go to settle permanently there till about that time, so I may possibly go over with him after

all. Anyway, of course I should join him at the expiration of my term. As we understand at present, he keeps Fiji and the High Commissionership as well as New Zealand, so we shall constantly be going backwards and forwards. The great drawback to this otherwise most pleasant change is having to give up the idea of going home. As you know, we expected to go home at the beginning of next year; now it may not be for a very long time.

We all go to Samoa to-morrow in the *Emerald*, then straight back for the mail here. Then I am off to Rotumah somehow, to relieve Murray, but you will hear again from me before that time.

To change the subject, my old skipper committed suicide the other day, some say because I got him fined fifty pounds. My own opinion is that he was mad. Please tell Dr. Gunter that by great luck I have got a full-grown bird of the same sort as the one I sent home, a present from a chief at Hope Island, by name, I believe, Megapod*is* or *us* Brenchlii, but I think this is the only fully grown specimen ever obtained. We kept him alive for a month. Please tell him also I had intended to send it to Sclater on the chance of being made a life member of the Zoo, so he ought to do something handsome for me. All my Fiji presents I am going to send home by sailing ship, whether I come or not myself. They are all packed and ready, and my rooms here look very dismal in consequence. It will cost a

good lot, but I could not make up my mind to leave them or sell them. I have been so much more about the Pacific than most people here, and was always known as "the Governor of Fiji's son," that my collection is valuable, more from association than anything else. Almost every single thing I have got, every club and every spear, has its history. Some of them are quite unique (and hideously ugly too); for instance, a mat given me by Albert at Rotumah, which only the kings were allowed to touch or sit on, and probably about 300 years old. I think also my pearls are the best lot all round in Fiji, though many are worthless. I have never counted them, but I must have upwards of a thousand, out of which perhaps twenty are really good, and the rest merely curiosities.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

August 20th.—Sailed in the *Emerald* for Samoa, where we arrived on the 24th, nothing of much consequence happening by the way.

Before leaving we had seen in a New Zealand paper that H.E. was appointed to that colony, and so we hastened back to Fiji without going to Tonga and Rotumah, as we had intended.

Though I had twice been within a mile of Samoa, I had never landed there. We found it very much hotter than Fiji, and, for a wonder, not raining.

Three days may be spent very pleasantly in Apia in the following manner, viz. :—First day, ride over to B.'s and dine ; second day, walk over to B.'s to dinner ; third day, take a boat, and spend the day with B. This done you may as well go elsewhere, as the amusements of Apia are then exhausted. We had to exchange our gorgeously bound Ratification of the Samoan Treaty, for a piece of foolscap stamped with the Royal Seal (formerly an imprint of the royal thumb, now a tin seal marked with the letter S). Of course the Samoans were fighting hard, that is to say, cutting down each other's trees and burning each other's towns, which represents "the pomp and circumstance of glorious war" in their estimation. The hostile parties, however, rarely meet, and would probably be at a great loss to know what to do if they did. We found the King surrounded by his ministers, and attended by his secretary, one Hunt. After signing the Ratifications, H.E. addressed a speech to him, which frightened the old man a good deal. He recovered sufficiently, however, to go on board, and get his twenty-one guns, an honour he had never received before. After the ceremony, the princess, a pretty girl, dressed in a mat, gave us cigarettes all round. On the subject of mats, these are the proudest possessions of the Samoans ; the older and dirtier they are, the more valuable they are.

The next two days was spent in hard work with the consuls, who were all insulted by the King,

and had to be petted. Consuls always are being insulted about something. G., our consul, and myself, attended a ball in the evening, given by a Chinaman on the occasion of his wedding to a Samoan girl. The ladies were mostly half-castes, and extremely lovely. Before I left my most favoured partner "Eliza" had begged my studs, all my loose cash, my straw hat, some cigars and a tortoiseshell ring, and finally, as my reward for all this, threw her arms round my neck and before the whole room gave me a sounding salute, which shook the house to its foundations. "In Samoa do as the Samoans do." Your host introduces you to a partner, though introductions are not absolutely necessary; you say, "You makeum dance along o' me." There is no fear of her refusing. Alas, the ball which began with such rectitude of demeanour, soon became a performance at which it was not consistent with the dignity of H.B.M.'s Consul and H.E.'s Private Secretary to remain. The Samoans are certainly a jollier people than the Fijians; they are always laughing, and are not afraid of one.

NASOVA,

September 11, 1880.

I think I said some time ago that I was again going to Rotumah, and in another letter that I was not. It is settled definitely now that I go there at once

for about three months, and then follow on to New Zealand to resume my P. S. duties. As you probably know by the English papers, it (Rotumah) is now a British colony. I am to have the honour of being first "Governor."

What my official title may be I don't know, but I am to have very high powers, higher even than Deputy Commissioner. If I am successful, as I have every hopes of being, in introducing the Fijian laws and native code and in giving the place a good start, I cannot but think it will be much to my advantage when brought before the Secretary of State. My duties will be multifarious; for instance, I shall vaccinate all the people at once, a performance not often done by a Governor in person. However, in Rotumah one is not proud. I am only preceding H.E. by about three weeks, to get things ready for the ceremony of hoisting the "British flag." Every one says I am extremely lucky, and I think so myself.

I did not much care about the prospect before the place was annexed. Now it is a very different affair. The most absurd reports have been going about me here. Some said I was to be First Commissioner in H.E.'s absence. Some foolish people even said I was to be Lieut.-Governor. I suppose I look much older than I am. However, I am very well pleased with my present billet.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER.

On the 18th of September 1880, Hugh Romilly received a commission as Acting Deputy Commissioner for Rotumah, and sailed for that island as First Commissioner after its annexation to Fiji. His chief business there was to introduce the native code as existing in Fiji, recommending such modifications of it as would suit the people. On his arrival, all the chiefs collected together and unanimously decided to present him with a house, which was to be built as a compliment to him. Though nothing could be more friendly than the attitude of the natives, or more helpful and cheery than his assistant, Mr. W. Allardyce, the isolation of his existence towards the end of this period must have been very depressing, as appears from some of the letters.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

Saturday, Sept. 18th.—Left Fiji in the *Louisiana* for Rotumah. The *Patience*, also sailing for

Rotumah, anchored close up alongside for the night. Next day we both got off together, and made a race of it the whole way. We were not a mile apart till within fifteen miles of Rotumah, where we lay to. I found Murray and Allardyce both looking very well. They had heard no news of course, and were very glad to hear of the annexation of the island. The people did not greet me in a very boisterous manner, but seemed in a quiet way glad to see me. In the evening, all my old lady friends came up to the house with flowers, which they insisted on sticking all over me wherever a flower would stay, till I looked more like a Jack-in-the-Green than a rational being. They were also very anxious to oil me all over, but here I drew the line. The next thing to do was to get over their heart-breaking farewell with Murray. They were already beginning to compose their faces, and to reprove every one who made a joke. As I had been all through this myself before, I looked on rather curiously to see how long their sorrow would last. When I had left the island every one looked as if he would never smile again. Even then I had my doubts. We got Murray off on Saturday 25th. Exactly the same weeping and wailing was gone through on the beach over him as there had been over me. They watched him tearfully as he went on board; but as soon as he was out of sight, what a change was there! The sad faces all assumed a broad grin, the frames which, a few minutes previously, had apparently been con-

vulsed with grief, and very noisy grief too, now shook with merriment; sighs of relief were heard all round, and they all looked at me as if to say, "Did we not do it well?"

September 28th.—Had my first meeting of chief men, and told them many things which doubtless they have already forgotten. The only thing worthy of mention was Albert's remark on the subject of missionaries. He said, "Missionary very good, pray; chief very good, order man; missionary not order me; small fellow missionary stop my belly."

Next day we went on cutting trees for our house. It has become an established thing for six or seven girls to come and sit for two or three hours after dinner in our house and stare solemnly at us without speaking a word. This is what Albert calls "having a yarn." This performance over, he invites us up to his house, where there is a sort of ottoman of mats for us to lie down on, and we are fanned by the whole family. I do not know if Eastern potentates are fanned like this, but I always fancy I feel like one.

ROTUMAH,
September 24, 1880.

Just a line from here to let you know I have relieved Murray. The people all seem pleased to see me, and are intensely delighted with the news I bring that

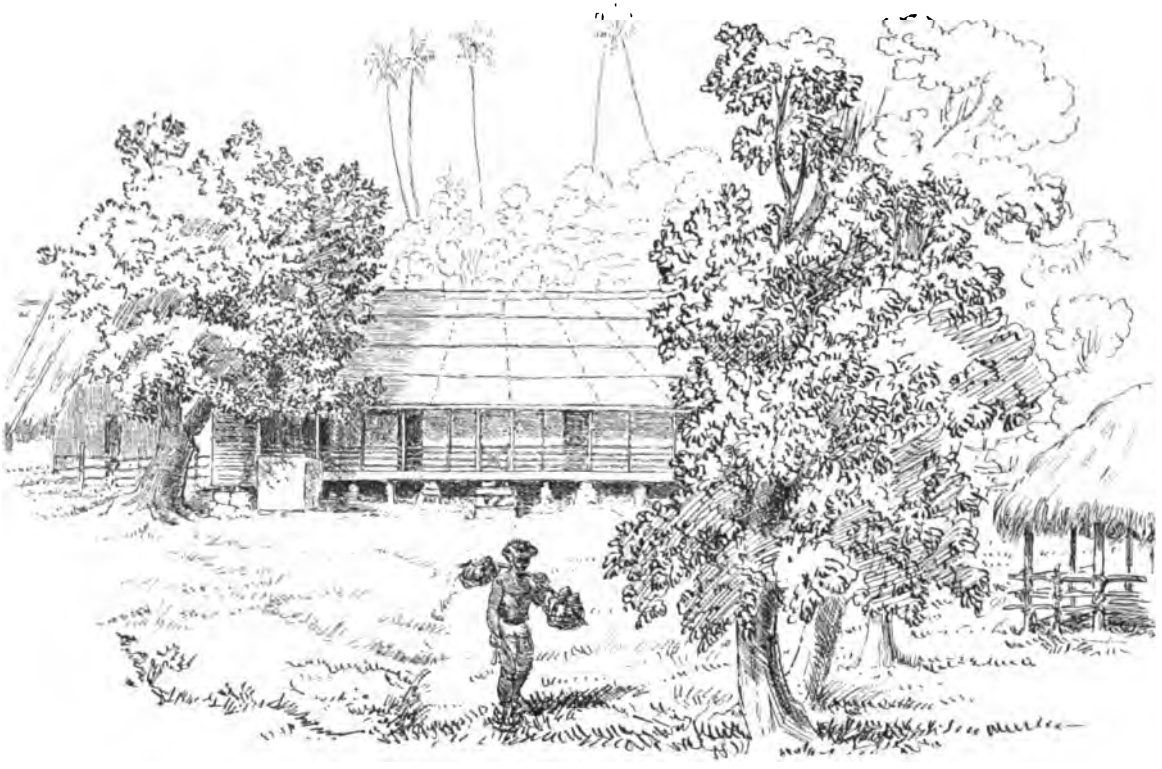
the island is annexed. I am afraid they will be disenchanted soon, as it is an expensive luxury belonging to Great Britain to people who have never paid a sixpence of tax before. The island is assessed at about a thousand pounds, or about ten shillings per head of working population. Native produce to the amount of ten shillings represents a good deal of labour. The revenue I estimate at £1450, the expenditure at about half that. It is to be kept entirely distinct from Fiji, with the exception of being under the same Governor. In course of time, when its capabilities have been ascertained and developed, I think it ought to be a very rich little place. I am going to introduce, to start with, cotton, cocoa, coffee, cinchona, and vanilla, to see how they succeed. I think cocoa ought to do. It does fairly well in Fiji, but that place is not quite hot enough. We are six degrees further north here. Vanilla is so delicate a crop that I have fears that no one will attend to it carefully enough, but I mean to try it. Coffee ought to do splendidly, if I can get seed without introducing the disease. Sea island cotton ought to be a success too. As you know, I am not much of a gardener, but I know something of all these things. My salary is £450 at present, which, as salaries go in Fiji, is very high.

The Governor will be here in November to hoist the flag. I expect to be here about four months, perhaps more. At the end of that time I shall follow H.E. on to New Zealand.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

October 1st.—The chiefs collected all their men together, and for the first time in the history of the Island the whole population assembled together at Motusa. They had come together ostensibly to build our house, but for the first day they found it was pleasanter to sit under the trees and yarn. Next day, however, they set to, and collected stones and built my foundation.

October 5th.—All the people set to work at the house again. It is interesting to watch the way they work. They set to with tremendous energy for half an hour or so, by which time they are tired, and require keeping up to the mark. Each tribe, seven in all, appoints a man to act as flapper. When he sees any one lagging, he dances round him, chaffing him and uttering most horrid yells. This invariably has the desired effect; the whole tribe take up the yell, and the lazy one goes back to work with renewed energy. I have it impressed on me over and over again every day, that never before in the history of the Island have they taken so much trouble for any single individual. They say, "Suppose Chief say, all man come build house, we laugh, say fool man; suppose you say come, we think very good." Every able-bodied man on the Island is working, and many who are not able-bodied.



OUR HOUSE AT NOATAU

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.

To face p. 97

ROTUMAH,
October 14, 1880.

MY DEAR M.,—It is most hopeless work writing letters when one is absolutely ignorant when a chance of sending them may arrive. However, here goes.

To begin with, I have nothing whatever to tell you. I am building a house here, which is rather good fun. The whole island have met together, and there are constant rows between rival chiefs and their followings. I sit under a tree and smoke, and enjoy the scene. It is very much the same thing one sees at home. "You hit me." "I hit you!" "Yes, you hit me." "Do you think I am afraid?" &c. &c. They always expect me to stop them, as they say the missionaries always used to, but they are a good deal annoyed to find that I do nothing of the sort, but, on the contrary, enjoy the fun.

The posts of my house are magnificent, made of tulip-wood, and polished by hand with oil. It is rather solitary grandeur, however. The other day, when we were holding our council of chiefs, after some conversation the spokesman informed me that I was the only unmarried chief in Rotumah, and that the people would respect me more if I selected a wife from among them. They said further, that they had already selected a damsel of high birth who would be the very thing for me. This was rather

awkward, but I hinted that I was already engaged to the daughter of a high English chief, and on my return to England would be publicly executed if they discovered I was married already to some one else.

I hope to get away soon, and go to New Zealand with H.E.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

ROTUMAH,
October 16, 1880.

I begin a letter to you, though at present there is no chance of sending it. I am expecting the Governor in the *Danae* about the 1st of next month, to hoist the flag here.

I feel being absolutely cut off from the world, and news of any sort, a good deal, and more at this time than any other.

I am engaged in building a house of the utmost magnificence. I am found labourers by the chiefs. The only expense of it is in presents to the carpenters, or "Machous." It was great fun cutting the beams of the house to run fore and aft, as they are all *single trees*. It took nearly the whole population of the island to bring some of them down from the bush. The flagstaff was the great excitement. It must have been at least 150 feet high before it was cut down, out of which

about 100 feet are straight. We dragged it about six miles, a performance which took us four days. Now that we have got it here, I think it extremely doubtful whether we shall be able to put it up, as we have no appliances. They are certainly very simple people here. They told me that they had fixed upon a splendid name for the house, but for two or three days I could not get out of them what it was. From their account, I thought it must be something either very original or very poetical. They told me at last that they had settled to call the house "the house of wood." They said that if the whole island had thought for a year they could not have hit upon a cleverer name. I agreed with them that as the house was built of wood it was at least appropriate.

I tried the other day to translate some of their songs and dances, as that is supposed to be the best way for getting at the customs of a people. The first I got was as follows:

> "A man went to sleep with a flower in his ear,
> At cockcrow he got up.
> He felt very cold."

This did not strike me as a very instructive song, so I got another:

> "A bird sat on a tree and began to sing,
> After a short time he flew away."

The next was nautical:

> "The mate gives an order to reef the mainsail;
> The watch were looking at the time:
> It was eight bells."

After this I gave it up in disgust.

October 19, 1880.

I have, among my other accomplishments, turned surgeon. One of the traders here, Jones by name, blew his hand off with dynamite yesterday. Luckily, McGregor, before I left Fiji, had given me an amputating case, so with the help of two other white men we cut the hand off, only taking ten minutes over it. We are rather proud of this performance. I am writing an account of it to McGregor, as I don't think he could have done it better himself. It will be a great triumph if we pull him through, which I think we shall do. The great fear in this climate is tetanus.

Albert has just come in, and seeing me writing a letter, said he wished to write a letter to my "fam," as he calls the family. Accordingly, I have written the enclosed, from his dictation, in his own English, much of which will probably be unintelligible to you. I make no comment on it, as most of it refers to myself.

[ALBERT'S LETTER.]

ROTUMAH.

Me all same brother you. The time Mr. Romilly stop Rotumah me look out all same you when he stop England. Me wish me savey you, but think be no good. Suppose ship go you write me. Suppose Mr. Romilly go you sorry me. Send letter. This my letter you. Time Mr. Gordon stop Rotumah good too much. Mr. Romilly all same. Mr. Romilly same my boy, you same my brother. Suppose you wish something Rotumah you write your brother. Me make him.

This my letter you,

'ALIPATI' me.

Me savey you got three son, two daughters. Me got three son, three daughter. My fam brother your fam, all same you brother me.

ROTUMAH,

October 25, 1880.

MY DEAR S.,—I look on you as the sportsman of the family, and accordingly devote myself in this letter to that subject. If I were writing a description of Rotumah, under the heading of "sport" I should put "none." There are, it is true, some small birds to shoot, which are good eating, a diminutive species

November 7th.—Rotumah is the most depressing place when no ships come in. I have been here nearly two months without any news from the outer world; the ships which have been here brought none. The Governor has not arrived, and I do not expect him now. To add to the general depression, we have had incessant rain for three weeks. Everything is saturated with moisture. I can wring water out of my blankets at night, and even the paper I write on is like damp blotting paper. It is literally living in a vapour-bath. Every single man on the island has been laid up with fever and ague and rheumatism, with the exception of myself. If I was only a missionary I might have been making lots of money out of medicines lately.

November 10th.—We had seen a ship standing off and on for nearly a week, and much excitement was felt, as no boats had been able to get up to her. I myself thought she was on a kidnapping expedition, and took precautions accordingly. She turned out, however, to be a trading ship bound for Sydney, with a very timid captain. As he had had nothing but northerly weather he had been afraid to come to an anchor. At last I boarded him myself, and with Friday's help brought him to an anchor in Motusa bay. She had nothing in the way of food to spare on board, which was a bore, as we are decidedly short now ourselves. The consignment for Rotumah consisted almost entirely of tombstones.



MOTUSA IN JANUARY

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G. *To face p. 105*

The chiefs were much excited some time ago when they heard of the existence of such things, and have ordered a lot, which have now arrived. The Rotumah names are almost all wrong, but to a man who can't read that is a trifle. The price was rather a staggerer to some of them.

The same day we changed over once more to Motusa, this time I hope for good. Albert was unusually glad to see me, and at once informed me that all his tobacco was finished. I said, "Albert, suppose I plenty of 'baccy, you glad too much I stop Motusa; suppose 'baccy finish, very good I go Noatau." I expected an indignant disclaimer, instead of which Albert said, "Yes, that quite true!" I believe, so far as my experiences of natives go, that a native is glad to see you if he thinks he can get anything out of you, and never at any other time, though he will pretend to be so, especially if afraid of you. Gratitude is certainly no part of the native character. They have a great belief in the wealth of white men, and the more presents they get from one the bigger fool they think him. I have often heard a native, after he has begged something from a white man, laugh at him afterwards, and call him a fool for giving it. In Fiji there is literally no word in the language for "Thank you." I have often tried to make Albert understand what we mean by a gentleman, but he can make no distinction between traders and any other sort of white man. When I refuse to take money

for any service I render a native, such as giving him medicine, he ascribes it to enormous wealth. When I tell him that gentlemen do not keep shops, he says, "Chief plenty money;" and when I say that many gentlemen are poor and do not keep shops, he says, "He plenty fool." They have all heard of Rothschild both here and in Fiji; and having admitted to Albert one day that Rothschild was a gentleman, he said, "Rochile, he sell plenty thing." Here the discussion got too deep for the native mind. It is odd what posers natives ask sometimes, and what curious bits of information they pick up. I have been asked several times what are the relations between Turkey and England. I would defy our greatest statesman to define them in pidgin English. The other day Albert wanted to hear all about the Alabama claims.

November 11th.—Albert had a rehearsal for his people of the big dance, which was to have been performed before the Governor. It differed in no respect from the dances already described. Every man fired his gun off as he passed my tent, and as four of them burst I was glad when it was over. The dance was succeeded by the usual big feast, and I regret to say that I had many complaints afterwards that Albert had shot every one's pigs except his own to furnish it.

November 15th.—I went fishing with a party of natives. We fished on what was to me a new system, and which was very successful. They

prepared a lot of the stalks of the Barringtonia by pounding and breaking them up. These stalks when put in among the holes in the coral, stupefy the fish. They first put the net round a heap of coral, and keep one side of it on the bottom with stones. Then the two ends of the net are brought together and fastened to a stake, thus completely surrounding the coral. Then every one dives down and stuffs the stalks into the holes. This done all swim about till a half-stupefied fish rushes out and tries to escape. Everybody at once dives for him, and then the exciting part of the sport begins, for almost all the coral fish have got nasty stings, which they know how to use. The natives get the fishes' heads into their mouths and kill them before they try to pick them up. I wore a pair of fencing gloves, and so could take them at once. We were all put to flight, however, by a big sting ray, which, not being a coral fish, had no business there. His tail was nearly seven feet long, and he charged us in succession, till we all got out of the net. We finally speared him after a hard fight.

November 26th.—One day is exactly the same as another here, and yet the time seems to pass quickly enough. When one has nothing to do, one feels disinclined to do anything, even when a chance does arrive. However, we almost always muster up sufficient energy to take a walk in the afternoon till four o'clock. From four to five is our bathing hour, and about the pleasantest of the day. At

five or thereabouts we dine, and our dinner presents the same uniformity as our days. On Mondays, boiled beef curried, Tuesdays roast mutton hashed, Wednesdays boiled beef curried, Thursdays roast mutton hashed, and so on. I sometimes shoot some pigeons or golden plovers which make a variety. After dinner Albert comes in and has a yarn, and at half-past eight the moment of all others arrives,—namely, bed. The mornings are usually spent by me in writing, if there is anything to write, and superintending the work at the house. The fruit season has just begun—that is to say, there is more fruit now than at other times, though there is fruit of some sort all the year round. The ndawas,* which I think the best of all, have just begun, but unfortunately only last ten days or a fortnight. While they last the natives live on nothing else. They have got a peculiar taste, and remind one of the smell of a greengrocer's shop in Covent Garden, but are very good. A stick of tobacco will buy pine-apples for a week, and papawas, custard-apples, mangoes, nuts of all sorts, and any amount of other fruit are to be had in any quantities.

No ship from Fiji has made her appearance, and one feels how insignificant a place Rotumah really is. We certainly saw a ship one night about a week ago, and as it was at night and we only saw the lights, we concluded she was a steamer. We also heard three guns. Next morning I

* Nephelium pinnatum—Ed.

climbed my observatory, Sororoa, but could see nothing. We came to the conclusion that we must have heard whales jumping, and not guns at all.

On Sundays Albert tells me what the sermon was about, and it is usually something after this fashion. "Suppose man do good, give plenty copra mission, he go heaven too quick. Suppose do bad, Devil catch him, take him Helly." The Wesleyans have made a rule that communicants may dance once a year; that is to say, from a Wesleyan missionary point of view they have leave on one day of the year to be as wicked as they please.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

ROTUMAH,

Sunday, November 28, 1880.

Albert has dreamed a dream, and says a ship will come in to-day, so as I have not got any letters under way yet, I start one on the strength of his information. Sunday is our great day for ships, why I don't know. We have been two months and a half without news, and I am beginning to get impatient. You will no doubt suppose that I ought to have lots to tell you, but in reality I have nothing.

After the first novelty of a place like this has worn off, nothing strikes one as being worth record-

ing. There is an intense sameness in our life, one day being exactly like another. The time, however, seems to pass quickly. We spend our mornings in doing work of some sort, usually working at the house, and superintending others. I forget whether I gave you a description of the house. It is built from my designs, and is on the whole a success. Of course we have no means of sawing timber, so the waste of wood has been enormous. The walls are made on the principle of the log houses one sees in California and far back in Australia—that is to say, straight trees squared on two sides, and piled one on the top of the other. When they are the required height, they are squared down on the other two sides. Then doors and windows are cut out.

The foundation is a pile of stones, five feet high, a hundred feet long, and sixty broad. On this the house is built. The full length of the house is eighty feet, and it has a verandah round all four sides. The floor is made by laying down trees side by side, and shaping them down till the whole is flat. The main supports are posts of a sort of tulip-wood. The whole of the house is thatched with plaited leaves of the sago palm. Inside, the rooms are marked by partitions of split bamboo neatly plaited together. The walls and floor will be covered with mats to take off the rough look of the workmanship. On hot days, these can be wetted to cool the air that comes through them.

We have been living all this time in a wretched

little house, not much better than a native's hut, so I shall be glad when I can change.

I think I told you that I have a capital white servant here. I got disgusted with a lot of native servants, who are lazy and useless.

Grant, my man, is a splendid bushman, a most useful accomplishment here, and thoroughly honest and trustworthy. When he first came, his cooking did not extend beyond making tea and damper. Now, with the aid of Mrs. Beeton's Cookery Book, he sometimes gives us first-rate dinners. We have substitutes for everything. For milk, we use a juice obtained by tapping the cocoa-nut trees. This same juice fermented makes yeast for bread, and also a horribly intoxicating drink called Tokalau toddy. When we have got no flour we bake biscuits out of taro roots. We also make biscuits of arrowroot. We make a substitute for suet out of ivi nuts, and make capital plum puddings without one of the ingredients given by Mrs. Beeton.

Then, if I shoot, Allardyce fishes, and *vice versâ*, so that our larder is usually well supplied. There are landrails as big as small turkeys, and pigeons as big as hens. There are golden plover as big as woodcock, and many sorts of native birds good to eat.

We have been suffering a good deal from want of water, and our tanks have been empty for a fortnight. The result is boils and sores, which without fresh water get worse and worse. Salt water is very pleasant to bathe in, but does not keep one

clean. Yesterday, however, we had a thunderstorm, which filled our tank. We took off every rag of clothing and stood out in it, soaping hard till it was over. The water in the wells is half salt, being, in fact, sea water which has filtered through the coral. In a country like this, where it is essential to comfort and health to keep very clean, you cannot conceive the infliction it is to have no fresh water. Grant, my servant, is a man whom I can make a companion of very easily, and in many things—bush craft, for instance—learn a great deal from. He is very intelligent, but of his antecedents I know nothing. One does not ask awkward questions in this part of the world. He understands a little surveying, and with his help I am making a rough sketch of the island.

Our great amusement is canoe sailing inside the reef. The canoes are very small and the sails very large, and we spend as much time in the water as in the canoe in the pursuit of this amusement.

I leave off for the present with my invariable remark, that I will write more when the mail comes in.

ROTUMAH,

December 3, 1880.

MY DEAR L.,—. . . . My chief relaxation here is in marrying young couples. It is true they usually

apply for a divorce a few weeks after the ceremony, but what of that? Sometimes they are very modest and bashful indeed. In fact, one rather aged couple the other day, sooner than walk from one end of the island to the other and brave the chaff they would have to undergo, sent me a message that they were ashamed to come, and had settled that they would not be married. Of course I was not going to stand being done out of my two bob in that manner, so I posted after them, roused the lady out of her bed, sent for the bridegroom, who was working in the bush, and married them before they knew where they were.

I think I shall have to marry my servant, a steady-going Scotchman, soon, as he is desperately smitten with a young princess. The young princess does all the courting, and he will soon succumb. She leaves presents every day, of lumps of pork, bananas, red paint, and oil for him. Alas! my situation is so exalted here that no one presumes to court me. I take dancing lessons every day in order that, like the Bishop of Rum-ti-foo, I may give pleasure to my people.

ROTUMAH,

December 12, 1880.

MY DEAR M.,—I have lost all count of time in this place, and don't know when I wrote last to you.

I am at present laid up—hence this paper and pencil.

I have got into my new house, which is an enormous edifice, has taken three months to build, and will probably be blown down next month during the hurricane season.

Before we put up the partitions of the rooms inside, we invited all the young men and women in the island to a ball. It was a great success. About a thousand people came, and danced from about 7 P.M. to 10 A.M.

The room was lighted with candles stuck on the floor in a pool of grease. This might be dangerous at home, but there is no fear of dresses catching fire here, the said dresses being composed of green leaves and about two feet from the floor. Every one who had got a baby of her own, or who could borrow one from some one else, brought it. When the mother felt inclined to dance, she deposited her infant on the floor, usually in the middle of the room. It seldom happened that she found it there on her return, as the poor child got kicked and banged about by the dancers, till it finally subsided among a heap of other babies in a corner. Notwithstanding this apparently thoughtless treatment on the part of their elders, these children seldom took the trouble to wake up. I was much afraid that there might be difficulty in identifying their proper owners when all was over, and would willingly have pinned numbers to them; but as they were not of

an age to wear clothing, of course I could not do so without grave injury to the child.

In Rotumah a lady has no idea of not dancing merely because no one asks her. At any time of the night you might have seen half a dozen ladies each performing a frantic "pas seul."

I am busy cutting a lot of sticks for you, which I hope to be able to present in person at some not very remote date. They make rather pretty sticks out of old spears, inlaid with silver.

[*EXTRACT FROM JOURNAL.*]

December 21, 1880.—I see that my last entry was nearly a month ago, the reason being that I have spent all that time on my back from having nearly split my foot in two with an axe. We have been in the new house nearly a month now, and certainly the change is most agreeable. It is very cool, our temperature seldom rising above 80°.

January 8, 1881.—This being my first entry in my book for the new year, I confess to having been very lazy of late, but it has not been my fault, for I have been laid up with a bad foot and hand, and am by no means well yet. Nothing, however, of much interest has happened in the Island till lately, when a fight between this tribe at Motusa and Nimfang's tribe at Oinafa was imminent.

A rather amusing thing happened soon after coming into this house, which reminded me of a story

in "Ingoldsby." My servant Grant, for four days in succession, lost a pair of trousers, and could not imagine where they were. At last he came to me in great distress, and said that all these garments having disappeared, he would be reduced to the native dress, and being a most decent man, he said he did not like it at all. I advised him to keep awake the next night and see if his trousers walked off of themselves. He said that he would do so, and Allardyce and I went to bed as usual. About two o'clock Grant came into my room and woke me up, saying that our old mad friend Herena was in the drawing-room, doing what is usually known as "making hay." We watched her for some time, and at last she went into Grant's room. Here she hunted about till she found his last pair of trousers, and then she gravely divested herself of all her garments and put on Grant's instead. She then went into the cook house and took them off again, and finally hid them under a lot of firewood. At this stage of the proceedings Grant caught hold of her. She did not seem a bit surprised, but at once offered to show him where the others were hidden, as she said, for their greater safety. Next morning I sent her to Oinafa, forbidding her to come back into this district.

On the first of the year we agreed that as no communication had come from Fiji concerning this Island,* we would adopt English law at once.

* The reason for this was owing to there having been a second outbreak of measles in Fiji.—Ed.

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A ROTUMAH WARRIOR

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G. *To face p. 117*

There was some trouble with the white men, who all waited upon me, and said that they did not want to pay for trading licences. After some talk, however, they all took them out.

On Thursday, the fifth of January, I got a note from Jonas saying that the Oinafa men were buying ammunition, and were going to fight. I sent Mr. Allardyce down early in the morning to find out about it, and with instructions to seize any rifles he could find. It turned out that the quarrel was between Nimfang and Albert, on account of A. having been given kava before N. after one of the meetings. As we had settled at the last council that Albert and Marof should be the two head chiefs, and Nimfang had not raised any objection at the time, I called all the chiefs together to deliberate as to what should be done. Kafonika, Vasea, Marof, and Albert all joined together and said they would fight Nimfang, who had insulted all this part of the Island. As they began to get very much excited I had to stop them talking. The matter is not settled yet, but on Thursday next all the Oinafa people come to talk to me.

Nimfang was to have come to my house at the head of his men, and ask me who was head chief, Marof or Albert; whichever I said was chief he was going to fight the other.

January 16, 1881.—In consequence of my continued ill-health I have determined to go to Sydney if no Fiji ship comes in. The *Isabelle* is here and

starts on Wednesday or Thursday for Sydney. I am aware that this proceeding is irregular and may draw down on me an official censure, but as I have been getting worse and worse for the last two months and am so weak that a walk of a hundred yards tires me out, I think there is no good in permanently injuring my health by waiting till the end of the hurricane months for a ship. On the fourteenth I called a meeting of chiefs to say good-bye to them, and they would have been very sorry I think, only Albert had forgotten to give them their breakfast. However, they all said civil things. Having once before gone through the pain of parting here, and after seeing how soon they recovered Murray's departure, I look with distrust on their expressions of grief.

The *Isabelle* brought down a new French priest. There was rather an amusing scene when they were told that they had to pay duty on their luggage, &c. "Mais Monsieur, c'est pour Dieu, c'est pour Dieu." I asked them if everything, including a cart and horse and a hogshead of claret was "pour Dieu" too. They said "Mais oui, c'est tout pour Dieu." I told them that it would be a more acceptable offering if they complied with the laws of the country first, and at the same time handed them my "little bill," which shocked them very much.

On hearing of my departure, Albert said he would get up a big fishing party in my honour, and at once issued orders to his four tribes to bring all their nets, and that every man, woman, and child was to come

and help. As it was a great success I will give a short account of it. Albert, who is not much of a fisherman, made me get up in the middle of the night—*i.e.*, 5 A.M., so as not to be late. We did not begin till 10 A.M., so I walked about and swore at Albert for five hours. The plan of the fishing was as follows. A big barrier of nets was to be made opposite my house, stretching from the shore to the reef in form of the letter V. The apex of the V was about half way to the reef, and an enormous bag had been constructed about fifty yards long, into which the fish could go, but not return. Before half-tide parties of natives had been sent in canoes to block every passage and hole in the reef through which a fish could escape. About three hours before low water the beating party, consisting of some 1500 natives, were to start from a spot about three miles down the coast, and beat the water between the shore and the reef towards the barrier of nets. This was calculated so that they should reach the nets at low water, at which time there is in no place more than three feet of water inside the reef. Their numbers were increased as they came along by the parties guarding passages in the reef. All the men had spears, and the women and children carried baskets and sticks to beat with. Of course the nets had been put down at high water, so that every fish within a stretch of water three miles long by about a mile broad must be enclosed. About an hour before low water I went out in the big canoe belong-

ing to the tribe of Ituku, and took up my position at the mouth of the bag of the net.

Each wing of the net was about half a mile in length, and behind it was a line of at least two thousand natives with spears. No one was to spear a fish till I had speared one first, and as I could only use my left hand, I was rather afraid that they might have to wait a long time. After waiting about half an hour the line of beaters turned a corner about a quarter of a mile away and presented a very picturesque, though somewhat ludicrous appearance, as some of the chiefs who thought it beneath their dignity to beat, were stalking along up to their waists in water and carrying white umbrellas over their heads. However, when about two hundred yards from the apex of the net, they all halted, and a long net was stretched right across, joining the end of each wing, and thus surrounding the fish with nets on all three sides. Up to this time they had come along very quickly, the fish swimming in large shoals about a hundred yards ahead of them. Now, however, that the third net was down and the fish shut in, the beaters began to run and splash and yell, making the most infernal noise. The water at first seemed perfectly alive with fish charging the net in thousands, and being turned by the natives on the other side. Every one now looked at me, anxious to begin spearing, and seeing an old "chinaman" trying to hide under a stone, I jobbed my spear through him with my left hand, and held him up.

Immediately thousands of spears began to fly; some of the big fish swimming away with them. The fish all this time were making for the apex of the net where the bag was, and all of a sudden a tremendous rush of ten-pound fish went straight into it. The enormous bag, fifty yards long, seemed literally full, and though there was a crowd of canoes waiting to take them, they could not be turned out fast enough, and there seemed to be every prospect of the net being carried away as rush after rush came pouring in.

The most lively fish, called "Naire" here, and "Sanka" in Fiji, all kept together like a flock of sheep, and repeatedly charged the net and the natives too, who were capsized in dozens. They were all about the same size, varying from ten to twenty pounds, so that the weight on the net was enormous when they charged. The mullet were unable to jump over, as the nets were raised a couple of feet above the water by sticks. The scene inside the net where the beating party were spearing, was one of frightful confusion. Every now and then a sting-ray would make a lane through the natives, who all got out of his way, looking like a porcupine with half a dozen spears in him and beating the water with his long tail. The "chinamen," too, were great fun, as the moment they are speared, they puff themselves out to six times their size, and frequently burst.

I had no means of even guessing the number of

fish killed, but in one rush of Naire I calculated that about a thousand went into the bag at once. The spearing went on for about an hour after the lively fish had all been caught.

On the whole it was very exciting work, and every native in the island had about ten times as much fish as he could eat. There were some fish I did not know, of most wonderful shape and colouring, and one or two that even the natives had not got names for.

January 20.—The last four days have been spent in saying good-bye, and the people are, or pretend to be, sorry I am going. All the chiefs have sent presents of fowls, as they are under the impression I shall not have enough to eat on board. I have sent about a hundred on board, so we ought to be well supplied. Old Kafonika came to see me last night, and after sucking and mumbling my fingers for some time, produced seven shillings, which he said was his present to me, and that he was sorry it was all he had, as he knew that Sydney was an expensive place. I did not quite know what to do, as I knew he would be very much hurt if I refused it; but it suddenly occurred to me that he was a great hand at making native pillows (wooden), so I asked him to give me one of these instead.

In the evening all the traders in the island serenaded me with a band composed of kerosene tins. I gave them a bottle of grog, and I have no doubt that they all got drunk afterwards.

CHAPTER IX.

ROTUMAH LEGENDS.

THE following legends of Rotumah, collected by Mr. Arthur Gordon and my brother during their stay in the island in 1880, are taken from his journal, and though wanting in point and finish, they may be of some interest to students of folk-lore. A somewhat different version of the first story—that of Raho—has already appeared, written by Mr. Arthur Gordon, in a periodical called *Onward and Upward*, edited by Lady Aberdeen, but the others, so far as I am aware, have not yet appeared in print. I have Mr. Gordon's kind permission to publish the version of the story of Raho here given.

Oct. 28th.—In the afternoon I went up to pay a visit to an old blind man who used to be a friend of mine. He is a great authority on the traditions of the island, and said he wished to tell all his stories to me for me to take home to England. Though I believe Arthur Gordon got them all before me, yet I think they are worth writing down again.

STORY OF THE FIRST PEOPLE WHO CAME TO ROTUMAH, AND HOW THE ISLAND WAS MADE.

"There was once in Samoa a man named Raho. He had a granddaughter, Maiva by name. One day she was on the beach playing with other girls, and collecting small crabs for supper. She had a quarrel about a crab with a Samoan girl, which grew so fierce that the Samoan girl picked up a handful of sand and threw it in her face, saying, 'You are only a common person.'

"Maiva immediately threw it back, and then sat down and began to cry. After she had had her cry out, she went back to Raho and told him what the girl had called her. Raho was very angry, and for some days brooded over the insult, and at last made up his mind to leave Samoa. He announced this resolve to his family, who begged him not to go. Raho, however, was firm. He summoned the spirits of two dead grandchildren, who were called Poi and Vau, and informed them of his intention. On this the spirits ordered him to go to the middle of the island, and to fill two baskets—a big and a little one—with earth. Raho did this, and brought the baskets of earth down to the beach, where he put them in his canoe. He then called together two men (called Soutapuaki and Taf) and six women, his granddaughter Maiva, another one called Knutufia, Seontakvau, Ligliktau, Papangohn, and Muiakeora. He then launched the canoe.

"The spirits of Poi and Vau flew overhead to keep a good look-out. Raho followed the spirits, paddling for many days. After many days the spirits flew up very high into the air and said, 'Samoa is now a long way off,' and told Raho to drop his two baskets of earth into the sea. As soon as the two baskets were dropped, an island was seen slowly rising up out of the sea. The high land of Malhaha was the first to come up. The spirits now landed on the island—all the others staying in the canoe. One spirit was very good, but the other was mad. The good one walked about quickly and made the island smooth, but the mad one jumped about a great deal while the island was still soft, and made hills and valleys. The other people thought it was now time to leave the canoe, so they came ashore and settled down. Soutapuaki and Seontakvau came together without the others knowing anything about it, and in course of time a boy was born. Seontakvau was very much ashamed at this, and picked the boy up and threw him at Soutapuaki; he at once did likewise, and threw the boy back at Seontakvau. Neither of them would have anything to do with him. The two spirits saw this and were very angry, and so they took the boy to Niua (Savage Island), where they looked after him while he grew up. They called this boy Tokoiniua. When Tokoiniua was grown up the two spirits, Poi and Vau, brought him back to Rotumah. They were very angry with Raho because he had

This story is peculiar in many ways. To this day the bananas that Vilo planted are the only bananas that can be set before a chief, and their leaves must be put on his table at meals. Hybiscus, too, may only be worn by members of chief's families. It is also certain that all the members of the family who claim descent from Tokoiniua have a very large development of the eye-tooth on the right side of the lower jaw. I looked at this tooth in many members of this family, including Albert and Friday, and it is unusually large in all of them. Members of other families have not got it. I can't find out when they are supposed to have got their full complement of teeth.

The origin of the Cave Mamfiri* is also ascribed to an exploit of Raho's. He tried to sink the Island on hearing that Tokoiniua claimed it, but was prevented by the spirits of his grand-children, Poi and Vau.

Oct. 7th, 1880.—Allardyce and I went up to Halafa to have another yarn with my old man. He told us a good deal about the old kings or Saus. The Sau, though actually king, and the man of the highest rank in the Island, never took part in any of the active duties of royalty. Those were all delegated to the Mua or second in command. The Mua was probably really the more powerful man, as he headed the fighting parties, and exercised authority over every one but

* Referred to in the letter of February 1, 1880.—Ed.

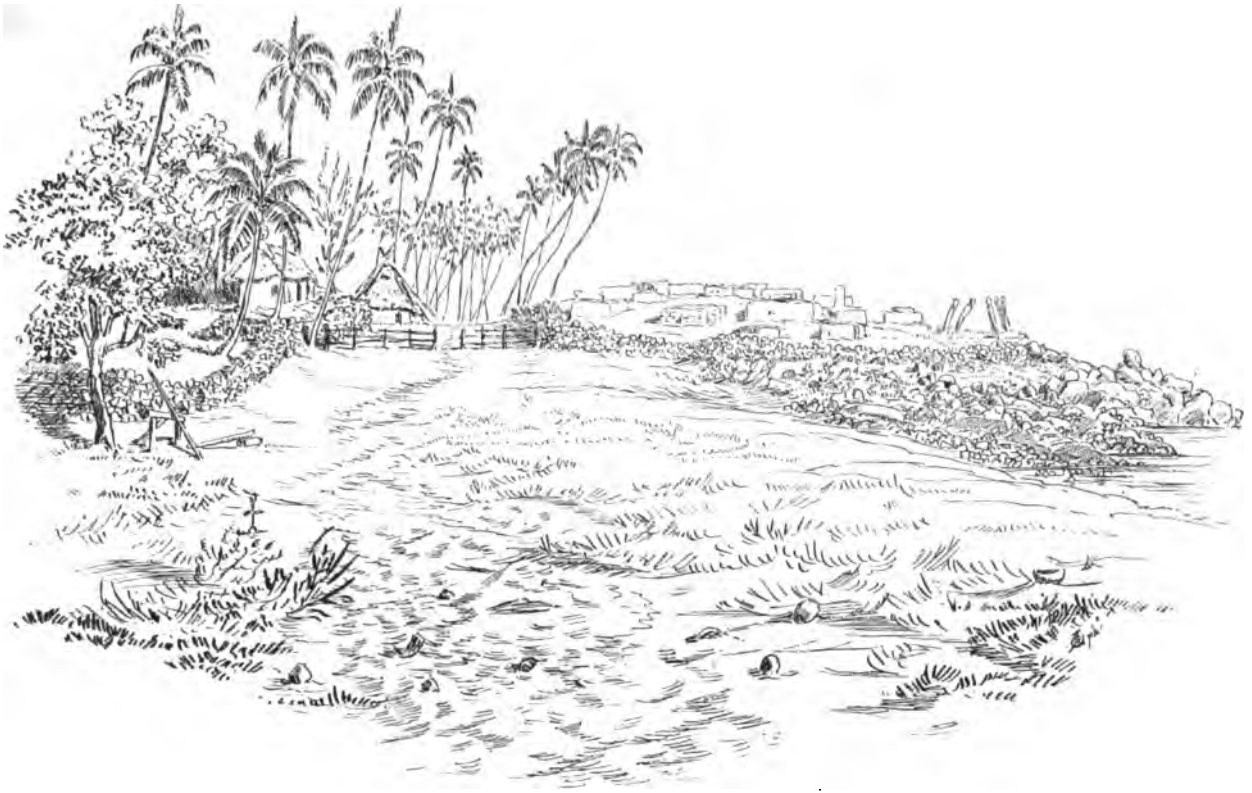
the Sau. The life of the Sau was uneventful, but according to native ideas must have been a life of unmitigated bliss. The only thing he had to do was to eat six large meals every twenty-four hours. His opinion was never asked on any subject, and his advice would not have been followed if he had given it. All he was good for was to be looked at. He was not allowed to take any exercise lest he should get thin. He always wore the same dress, and always had one spot of red paint on his face. He was allowed as many wives as he liked, but his children took no rank from him. In fact he seems to have been a sort of god with the Rotumah people; merely a dummy to be fed and nothing more.

The chiefs asked me if the Governor would object to wear the Sau dress when he came. I said I thought not "over his own clothes," as it is only a red mat and a pearl shell round the back. They said "very good," and there was a silence for a short time. Then with some hesitation Albert, as spokesman, said that to be quite correct the Governor should also wear the spot of red paint. I said I would submit this proposition to His Excellency, but that it was so opposed to our English ways that I was afraid he might not be induced to do it.

My old man told me the following story of the Rotumah Hercules:

"A long time ago the Motusa people were con-

quered by the Noatau people, and suffered the most abject slavery at their hands. They had to do the most degrading work and had no time to attend to their own gardens, or to build houses for themselves. This went on for a long time, and at last they got an order to bring big stones down to Noatau. Accordingly they made rafts and in this manner carried down a large number of stones. At last the work became too heavy for them, and they made up their minds to fight Noatau again. So one day, instead of taking stones, they went in a body to fight. After a severe battle they got beaten and had to run away. Fighting with the Motusa people there was a man called Sourangpol. This man had two wives. One he left at Motusa, and the other went to the fight with him to bring food. While Sourangpol had been collecting stones on the reef he had pulled up a big one and found a cave leading down under the island. Accordingly when he ran away he went with his wife to this place and descended underneath the ground. Down there he met a man who came up and spoke to him. Sourangpol said, 'Who are you, and what is the name of this place?' The strange man replied, 'This place is called "Limarai," and I am the king of it. My name is Narangsau.' Narangsau then asked Sourangpol what he wanted. Sourangpol replied that he had something very particular to say, 'that he had been beaten in war, and badly treated, and that he had thereupon



NOATAU, LOOKING NORTH

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G

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brought his wife to this place for protection.' Narangsau at once pressed him to stay with him. Sourangpol, however, was uneasy about his other wife whom he had left at Motusa, and said he expected a child to be born. Narangsau said, 'How soon?' and the answer was, 'In about ten months.' Sourangpol found himself so well off down in Limarai, that he decided not to revisit the upper earth any more. When, however, his child was born, he was informed of it by spirits. Limarai was the place where all the dead men's spirits went to. He sent a messenger back by the spirits, telling his wife to build a house in the bush for the boy, and promising that the spirits should look after him. This was done, and the child was put into it and left there. The food of the spirits agreed with him so well that the boy grew at a great pace, and at the end of a year was too big for the house. The house at that time was only a fathom long, and was not closed up at the ends. The mother was then ordered by the spirits to add another fathom to the house, but to leave it open at the ends as before. At the end of another year the boy had grown too big again, and the house had to be enlarged another fathom. This went on for eight years, the boy growing a fathom every year, and the house being enlarged proportionately. He was now therefore eight fathoms long. When he had attained this size, and the spirits had reported the fact to Narangsau and Sourangpol, Narangsau said,

'Eight fathoms is plenty long enough for that boy; if we allow him to go on growing, he will soon be too big, so don't lengthen the house any more, but stop up the ends of it to prevent his growing.' He then sent word by them that the boy's name was Foouma. No one but the father and mother knew of the child, as he had been kept in the bush. He soon began to walk about and to get very knowing. At this time the whole population of the island was being made to build a house for the chief at Noatau. Each village, however, left a few men to cook food to bring to them every day. Foouma came across some of them one day while he was taking a walk, and said, 'Who are you, and what are you doing?' They said they were relations of his, and were cooking food for the people at Noatau. 'What sort of food?' said he; they said, 'Fish and puddings.' Foouma then said, 'I should like some fish and I should like some puddings.' His relations, however, begged him not to eat at once, but that if he came back early in the morning he should have his fish and pudding. Foouma agreed to this, and came back in the morning, but his relations had taken their departure during the night, and had taken the food with them. He at once followed them down to the beach and launched a canoe to get to Motusa, as the two islands were not at that time joined together. The canoe was small and sank with his weight; accordingly he walked across, as the sea was not deep in that place.

He saw the canoes of his relations on the other side, and their footmarks going along the beach. These he followed till he caught them up. At the last town, before getting to Noatau, he said, 'Why do you run away, when you promised to give me fish and pudding? you have got the food you promised me there, and I will eat it.' They begged him not to, as they were afraid of the Noatau people, but Foouma ate most of it, but left some for the chief. He then told them to go on to the chief of Noatau along the beach, while he would go by the bush-road. After they had gone he pulled up a big tree for a club, and went on to Noatau by the bush-road. When he got there, the people were thatching the house. His relations, who had got there first, had told their own people to stand on one side so as not to get into trouble. Foouma at once began to kill the Noatau people with his club, beginning with those on the top of the house. Many of them ran away. After he had killed the people, he began knocking the house over. Foouma beat the whole island that day. He then asked his own people, 'When you came to Noatau, who treated you so kindly?' They said, 'Only one man, Amoi.' Foouma said, 'As I have killed the king, we might as well make Amoi king.' But Amoi was frightened, and did not wish to be king. He said, 'Make my friend Tafoki king instead.' So Foouma took Tafoki, and made him Sau, and brought him to Itumutu. He built a house for him there, and

then went on himself to Sororoa. Things went on quietly for some time, till one day Foouma, looking out of his house, saw a very tall man walking in the sea. He went down to the king at once, saying, 'Here is a foreigner coming through the sea.' The king said, 'Watch him and see what place he lands at.' The tall foreigner landed at Tulu. He had brought his daughter with him, floating on a cocoa-nut branch, and had given her a shark's head to feed on. When he landed Foouma said, 'Good-day; what is your name?' he said, 'Seremoana.' They both walked down to the king together. Foouma then said, 'of what nation are you?' "Seremoana said he came from a place called Marangoyau. Foouma left him with the king, who soon after married Seremoana's daughter. Her name was Fofanua.

"Things went on quietly for some time longer, till one day about a hundred canoes came in sight, and with them was one big man called Raviak. Foouma again went to the king and said, 'Here are many canoes.' The king said, 'Watch where they land.' The canoes came in and landed at Motusa. As soon as they had landed, Foouma ran down and jumped on board the canoes, and pulled down the masts and tore the sails. He told the king what he had done and went home. The people did not try to fight, but sat still and looked on while he was doing this. They came from Tonga. They very soon began to look about them, and to play

about the beach. In front of the king's house was a big canoe. The strong man Raviak kicked the canoe over the house, and ran round and caught it on the other side. He then kicked it back into its old place. When the king saw this he was much frightened, and sent at once for Foouma. Foouma sent back word that Unufanua, an uncle of his own, and a very strong man, would go down and play with the Tongans. Unufanua asked what they had done, and Foouma told him. He at once went down to the beach and kicked the canoe in the same way as they had done. The king was very much pleased when he saw that Unufanua was as strong as the Tongans. Unufanua had kava with the king and went home. The Tongans then played another game. They ran along the beach after sea-birds, and caught them in their hands. This second game frightened the king rather more than the first. But Foouma again sent down Unufanua, and Unufanua came and caught the sea-birds too. The king said, 'That is all right. I was afraid you might not be able to do it.' After some time the Tongans came to have a talk with Seremoana. They asked him to join them in trying to kill the king and conquer the island. Seremoana promised them he would.

"The Tongans began at once to cut down cocoa-nut trees, to make a fence in order that they might keep out Foouma, and fight the people of the island alone. When this fence was finished they began to

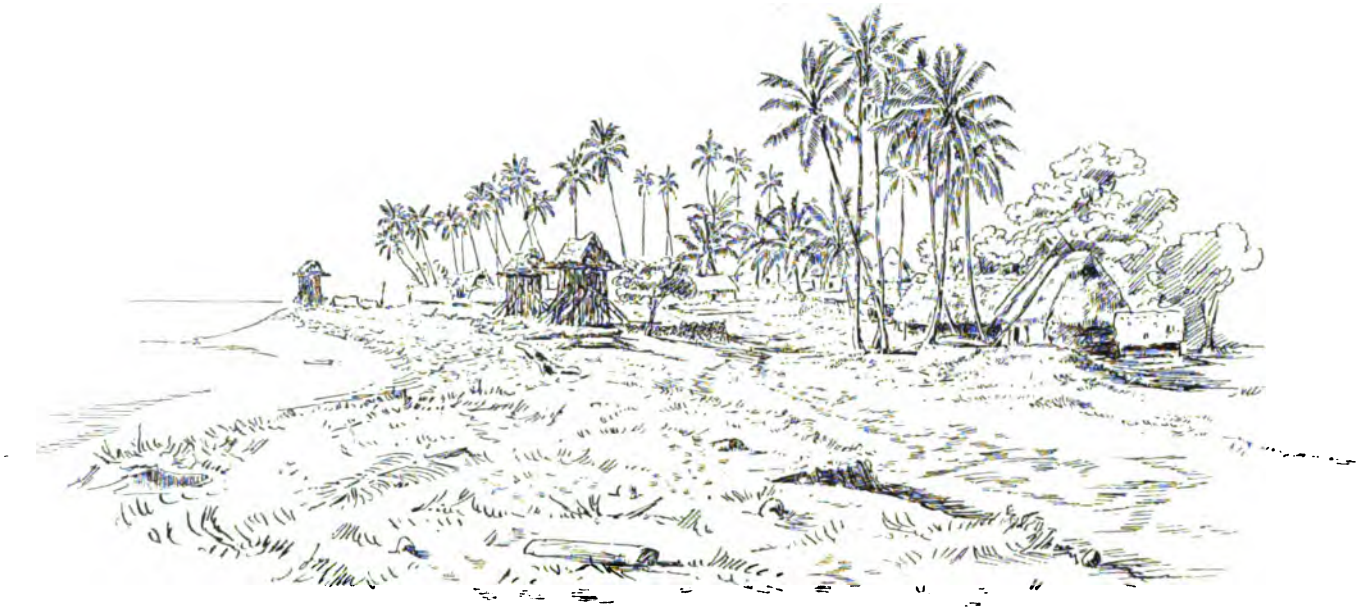
make spears. When the spears were finished they came to Seremoana to settle on what day they should begin the fight. As soon as Foouma heard all this he told the king to ask his wife, who was the daughter of Seremoana, to ask her father how many days would elapse before the fight would begin. The king's wife asked Seremoana, who told her. When the king asked his wife in how many days it would be, she held up her five fingers. The king sent for Foouma, and said, 'In five days the fight will begin.' When he heard this he sent off to consult with Unufanua at Lopta. Unufanua asked him for how many days he could fight single-handed, and he answered, 'Five.' On hearing this Unufanua said, 'Very good. I will come when five days are finished.' Next morning Foouma went out fishing, as he despised the Tongans; but he had not been fishing long before he saw his own house on fire. He left off fishing at once and ran up to his house. When he was quite close the Tongans threw a shower of spears at him. He fended them all off with his fishing net and none touched him. As he rushed on the people all got out of his way. He had a club in his house, eight fathoms long, but when he got in, he found it was half burnt. However, he fought the Tongans with the half that remained.

"They could gain no advantage over him for four days. But he was wounded in many places with spears and nearly dead. At the end of the fourth

day, Unufanua came a day sooner than he had bargained for. On his way he came across some old women talking. They did not see him and said, 'It would be a good thing if the Tongan people were to kill Foouma.' He said nothing, but only held his club over their heads. When they saw the club they looked round and saw Unufanua standing over them and were very frightened. He said, 'What are you talking about?' They said, 'Oh, nothing, only about ourselves.' He said, 'No, you were saying bad things about Foouma.' They answered, 'If you will let it pass this time, we will join the two islands together for you to walk across.' At this Unufanua was satisfied. He then walked up to the fence and saw it had been made left-handed, so he took up his club and began to knock it down. When the fence fell, he killed so many Tongans that the rest ran away. He was then able to come inside the fence and help Foouma. Foouma when he came up to him, was very nearly dead. Unufanua said, 'I thought you said you could fight for five days. If I had not come to-day you would have been killed.' He then asked him to go up to his house and have his wounds dressed. He went up to Lopta, and soon got well. When he had been there some time, Fofanua, the king's wife, ran away from him, and married a man called Temeri. The king did not like this, but was afraid to say anything. He sent to Foouma and Unufanua to say that they lived too far off, as he was fright-

ened of Seremoana. Unufanua and Foouma both agreed that Seremoana must be killed. They went down to his place, and found Seremoana asleep in his house, as his custom was in the middle of the day. Unufanua made a blow at the top of the house with his club, and broke it in half, and with the same blow cut Seremoana in two. They then went and told the king, who asked them to have some kava, after which they went back to Lopta. Seremoana's daughter Fofanua was very sorry, and began to cry when she heard of her father's death. She told her husband Temeri to take the body and bury it at Malhaha. After this the king went to Noatau for good, and Foouma and Unufanua spent the rest of their days happily at Lopta."

When my old man had finished his story, he told me that he was a good deal bothered by the missionaries, who had threatened to excommunicate him for talking about old traditions. I believe that they actually did excommunicate one man for telling me a story on Sunday. It has been so overdone that the missionaries only get themselves laughed at. In one district there are only four persons who have not suffered the dreadful penalty of excommunication. All the chiefs, with the exception of Marof and Tiporutu, are excommunicated. I should say that about nine-tenths of the population are in the same predicament.



NOATAU, LOOKING SOUTH

From a drawing by Arthur J. L. Gordon, Esq., C.M.G.

To face p. 139

November 10*th*.—I heard to-day to my sorrow that my poor old man who tells me stories is dying. I went off to see him, and found him very nearly dead.

January 10*th*, 1881.—My old blind man having wonderfully recovered, I give another story of his :—

"THE STORY OF TOAK."

Toak lived with his wife in Noatau, at a town called Remoa. His garden, however, was in Itumutu, at Halafa. One day, as he was visiting his garden, he met on the Halafa road a woman who said her name was Honitimous. He was much struck by her appearance, and fell in love with her. Some days later, when he was again visiting his garden, he was caught in the rain and sought shelter in the house in which Honitimous lived. After some talk he determined to stay there for the night. He went home next day, but very soon came back and stayed five days with her. This state of things went on for some time, Toak having now almost entirely deserted his wife. But, at length Honitimous informed him that she was pregnant, and Toak and she together counted the months which must elapse before her child should be born. At length the child was born. One day Honitimous said to Toak, "Take care of the child while I retire to the bush." Toak was very much surprised,

however, to see that she flew like a bird, he accordingly followed her and marked the spot in the bush to which she had been. On her return he said, "I will now go to the bush, so you look after the child." He then went to the place he had marked, and found there nothing but grass. On this he came to the conclusion that she was not mortal, but a spirit. On his return to the house he told her he was going back to his own wife, as he could not live with a spirit. To this Honitimous replied, "Is it not rather late to talk of going back to your wife?" But Toak said "No," and started off at once. Honitimous saw that there was something wrong with Toak, because he would not stay, but did not know what it was; she therefore resolved to follow him. When Toak got home his wife asked him why he did not stay with Honitimous. He said he thought she was a spirit, and would not live with her. Honitimous was listening outside the door, and heard this. Before he went to bed he told his wife to fetch a companion of his own to the house at cock-crow, in order that they might go out fishing. This Honitimous also heard, as she was still listening. When Toak's wife returned from this message all went to sleep. At midnight Honitimous flew on to the top of the house and crowed like a cock. Toak woke up at once and called his wife, who prepared his fishing-lines and fish-baskets; he then went out of the house and saw Honitimous, whom, as it was dark, he mistook

for the friend he was expecting. Accordingly, they both went down to the beach and launched the canoe and put the lines and fish-baskets in it. Toak paddled while Honitimous steered. While it was still dark a squall came off the land, and when it had subsided it was daylight, but land was nowhere to be seen. Without turning his head round, he said to Honitimous, "Oh! this is a very bad thing—we have lost the land." But Honitimous said, "No, it is not bad." Toak, hearing a strange voice, turned round and saw Honitimous steering the canoe, and when he saw her he was very much frightened, and began to apologise for his behaviour to her; but she said, "Do not apologise to me; I am not going to harm you, though you are a bad man, for telling your wife all about my doings, and saying that I was a devil. If I am a devil, there is no reason you should have said so. I never asked you to come into my house."

In the morning Toak's friend came down to the house to go out fishing, but Toak's wife said, "Why, you left with him at midnight." His friend said, "If so, Toak must have gone with a spirit." And when he saw that the canoe was really gone, he came back and told Toak's wife, who cried a little, but not much. After Honitimous and Toak had been at sea some time, she said to him, "I shall not harm you, but I shall not let you land again in Rotumah, as you have not behaved well to me, but I shall take you to another country." After some

days they reached an island which was inhabited by only one man called Wahaahaa. "Here," said Honitimous, "I shall land you, and return myself to Rotumah; but don't go into Wahaahaa's dwelling-house; first go into the cook-house, lift up the dead leaves you will find, and hide under them, and you will see what Wahaahaa will do." Toak did as she directed him, and hid under the dead leaves. After a time Wahaahaa came in, but brought nothing with him in the shape of food, but sat down in the middle of the cook-house. He then said, "Stones, come out of the oven," and they all came. He then said, "Fire, come out," and the fire came. He then said, "Firewood and cocoa-nut husks come," and they all came and arranged themselves nicely. "Now," said he, "all fall into your proper places," and they did so. After a short time the fire burnt brightly, and the cocoa-nut husks that were not wanted stowed themselves neatly away, and at last the oven was ready. Wahaahaa then said, "Yam, fowl and taro come here." After they had come he said, "Now, fowl kill yourself, pluck yourself, get into the oven and cook yourself; yam and taro peel yourself, and get into the oven too; dead leaves come into the oven, and stones fill the oven up." The dead leaves from outside came; but the leaves which covered Toak tried to come, but were unable. Wahaahaa, surprised at this, lifted up the leaves and found Toak there. Wahaahaa said, "Where do you come from?" and Toak replied that he had drifted away

from Rotumah and had found this island, and, that being afraid to go into Wahaahaa's house, had hidden himself in the cook-house. Wahaahaa said, "Come into my house now, and we will have a yarn;" and Toak did so. When Wahaahaa thought the food was cooked, he told the baskets to go into the cook-house and fetch it. He then called a table, and told Toak to eat. For a long time they ate and slept, and never did any work, and Wahaahaa's wish always did everything that was wanted. One night Toak heard voices outside, and said, "There are some people talking." Wahaahaa said, "Yes; but they are cannibals; they come from the sky to fish, and I advise you not to have anything to do with them." But Toak said, "I will go and speak to them this once." Accordingly he went up to them and spoke to them, and they told him they meant to fish, but that the tide was not yet low enough. As soon as the tide was suitable they started off, and Toak went with them; but a difficulty soon arose as to who was to carry the basket—no one wishing to do so. However, Toak said he would carry it. The first haul of fish would have filled the basket, but Toak knocked the bottom of it out and let the fish drop through. The next time they drew the net the same thing happened. They thought that if they had one cast more they would have enough fish, so after the third haul they all went to wash at a clear spring. Toak did not speak to them, but lay down beside the basket, and after a short time they all

flew away. He then went home, taking the basket with him. When the strangers had got to the sky they began to portion out the fish, and asked each other who had brought the basket. No one knew, however, so they had to go to bed without fish. Next morning, after much talk about the basket, they came to the conclusion that they must have left it at their bathing-place, so they went down again to fish in the same place. But Toak served them the same trick once more; and a third time they came to fish, and again went home without any fish. They were very much surprised at this, and determined they would find out who the thief was. So, before they came down, they determined to stand in couples and remain in couples till they went back. So, when they began to fish this time they saw Toak standing alone; they at once seized him and took him off with them to the sky. When they got there they divided the fish, and said to Toak, "You have treated us very badly;" and they locked him up, and determined to eat him. In the morning two children came into the house where Toak was confined, and took down a bamboo; Toak said, "What do you mean to do with that bamboo?" They replied, that they meant to assist in the confinement of the king's daughter. Toak said, "Is it necessary to use bamboos for that purpose?" And they went out and told the king what he had said. The king said, "Bring Toak here;" and Toak said, "I will go at once." Before he went,

however, he called on Honitimous, who at once appeared to him. He asked her, "What shall I do in this difficulty?" She replied, "When you go into the house make some sinnet fast to the cross-beams, and when the woman is about to be delivered, tell her to hold on fast, and leave one of the windows open and I will come to-night." Toak made some objections on the score of modesty, and said it was not suitable for him to deliver the king's daughter. Honitimous said, "Do what I tell you, and I will come to-night." Toak then went to the king and told him he would save his daughter's life. After dark Honitimous kept her word, and came to Toak and said, "Go into the king's house and sit in front of the king's daughter, I will then see that she is delivered safely." So Toak did what she told him, and Honitimous fulfilled her part of the agreement, and when the child was born Toak caught hold of it and held it up and said, "Here is the child safe;" he then called for food for the mother, and after she had eaten he said, "Put her to bed, and let the child be kept warm with its mother for ten days—don't put it on a mat, and don't let her suckle it more than once an hour." Honitimous then said, "I have now provided for you here, so I shall go back to Rotumah." Toak thanked her, and said, "After this I will always stop here." The king was so pleased that he ordered half his people to be subjects to Toak, and, at the same time, appointed him chief physician to the Royal Family. Some

time afterwards Toak again called Honitimous, and asked her to come and live with him again; but she said, "I have got you a very good appointment, and I shall never speak to you again;" and with that she flew off to Rotumah. Toak was so angry that he threw a lot of stones at her, which may be seen to this day at Losa.

CHAPTER X.

THE ISLANDS.

THE extracts from his journal given at the end of Chapter VIII. will have explained to the reader how it was that Romilly's stay in Rotumah was brought to so abrupt a conclusion. To add to his sufferings from the blood-poisoning brought on by the wound to his foot, he was obliged, owing to his stores being exhausted, to live for several weeks entirely on native food. Moreover, there being at this time owing to a prolonged drought no fresh water in the island, either for washing or drinking purposes, he had to use cocoa-nut milk, which brought on another form of illness.

This must have been a time of severe hardship and privation, and no wonder that he seized the first opportunity of taking French leave of what would otherwise in all probability have been his grave. The 12th of February, 1881, found him back in Sydney, whence after a few days' stay, he sailed on the 15th of February for Wellington, New Zealand, to resume his duties as private secretary to Sir Arthur Gordon, who had in the meantime

been appointed Governor of that colony, while still retaining the High Commissionership of the Western Pacific. This return to civilisation, however, did not last long. After accompanying his chief on a visiting tour to the southern towns and ports of New Zealand, the middle of March 1881 again found Romilly setting forth for the islands of the Pacific. His commission as Deputy Commissioner had in the meantime been confirmed by the Secretary of State, and he was also about this time appointed a Vice-Consul for the Western Pacific by Sir Arthur Gordon. Armed with this dual authority, he set out, on the 15th of March 1881, from New Zealand to proceed to Sydney, and start from thence on what was described in a private letter to him from the High Commissioner as "an ambulatory mission of inspection of British Beachcombers." Going by way of Tasmania and Melbourne, he was back in Sydney again on the 10th of April. A passage had been ordered for him from this port in H.M.S. *Cormorant*, and in her he sailed on the 17th of April from Sydney *en route* for the Solomon Islands. It appears from his notes that he arrived at Ugi in the Solomon Islands on the 28th of April, and made several expeditions in the ship's boats to various tribes, chiefly with a view to investigating the circumstances relating to the murder of Lieut.-Commander Bower of H.M.S. *Sandfly*. In the course of these expeditions he visited the peoples of Santa Anna, San Christoval,

Guadalcanar, and several other large and small islands of the Solomon group.

In order to give him the means of carrying on his investigations in other groups, Commodore Wilson had placed H.M.S. *Beagle* at his disposal for two months. She arrived at Ugi on the 29th April, and Romilly sailed in her on the 7th of May, bound for New Britain and other groups of islands. On the 13th May he arrived at Blanche Bay, New Britain, where he investigated the circumstances of the recent murder by natives of Dr. Kleinschmidt, a German naturalist, and his two assistants, and also took as full evidence as was possible of the murders of seven other white men at the hands of the natives. During all this time, after leaving the Solomons, he was prostrated with fever. He next visited the north coast of New Britain, where he learned of the murder on the day previous to his arrival, of Mr. L., an English trader, and investigated the case. Here the *Beagle* was joined by H.M.S. *Conflict*, and on May 28th a landing party from both ships was sent ashore to try and capture the actual murderer, and give a lesson to the natives for the crime committed, which in this case seems to have been entirely unprovoked. The next day he sailed for Port Webber in New Britain, and after a short stay at that place he arrived, on June 4th, at Jesu Maria, one of the Admiralty Islands. Thence he sailed for Astrolabe Bay on the east coast of New Guinea, arriving there on June 11th, and

made an expedition inland to the foot of the mountain range. Some account of this expedition appears in the last chapter of his "Western Pacific and New Guinea." On the 13th of June he left Astrolabe Bay, and after visiting the various islands referred to in the extract from his report which follows, he returned about the end of July to Cooktown in Queensland, and arrived at Brisbane on the 15th of August. Here he was laid up for a fortnight with an abscess in the liver, the result, no doubt, of the unhealthy climates in which he had been cruising. As soon as he was sufficiently recovered to travel he proceeded to Sydney, and there a passage was given him on board H.M.S. *Emerald* for Auckland, N.Z. During the whole of the voyage he was dangerously ill with abscess in the liver, and on arrival at Auckland in September he was given sick leave to go to the hot springs of Wai Wera, on medical advice. After a considerable stay there, he returned to Wellington on the 5th of November, and was then strongly urged by the doctors to apply for sick leave to England. This he accordingly did, and six months' sick leave, which was afterwards extended to one year, was granted him. He accordingly left Wellington on December 4th, on board the *Emerald*, for Sydney, and arrived back in London on February 15th, 1882.

Unfortunately his letters during this—the most interesting cruise, perhaps, which he ever took—are both few and meagre, owing, no doubt, chiefly to the con-

stant attacks of illness with which he was prostrated, and his journal also was broken off at this period. I have endeavoured therefore to supplement them, to a certain extent, with extracts from his official report to the High Commissioner, and from a rough sort of note-book which he kept at this time, but which contains little beyond a mere record of some of his movements, his notes of the evidence taken at the various inquiries he held as to outrages committed, and drafts of his official reports. Some of the fruits of the expedition, however, are to be found elsewhere than in Blue Books, as witness his first book, "The Western Pacific and New Guinea," published by Mr. Murray in 1886, much of the materials for which were collected during the course of this cruise.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY,*
February 12, 1881.

The heading of this paper will doubtless surprise you. I see I finished the last sheet of my letter by saying that I would write more when the mail came in. The mail never did come in, and I took the opportunity of a schooner going to Sydney to take

* This letter is a continuation of that from Rotumah to his mother dated November 28, 1880, and given in Chapter VIII.—ED.

a passage, whereby hangs a tale. About two months before leaving Rotumah, I cut my ankle very badly with an axe while cutting down a tree, and the same evening, wonderful to say, succeeded in transfixing my other foot with a fish spear. I have no doubt in my mind that either one or the other was poisoned, as for two months after this performance I suffered from what seemed to be blood-poisoning of some sort. At all events, the most horrible swellings and abscesses appeared, chiefly on my hands, and I was confined to my bed and arm-chair for the two months. As I was nervous about myself and feeling very ill, I made up my mind that wherever the next ship was going to I would take a passage in her for change of air.

However, no ship came in, and one of my fingers was so bad and appeared to be on the point of mortifying, that I made up my mind to have it cut off by one of the native doctors, who are rather clever at that sort of thing. The same day that I had made up my mind to this, we heard the welcome cry of "Sail ho!" being passed along the beach, and it turned out to be a schooner bound for Sydney. I at once went on board, and here I am.

The effect of the rapid change from hot and damp to comparatively cold and dry weather has completely pulled me round, and except that I am extremely weak, I still feel very jolly and am getting better every day. My hand, too, is nearly well, though my ankle still wants looking after.

I am quite aware that I have committed an irregularity in thus going off without leave, and though I have of course explained the matter to my chief, it is possible, though I can hardly think likely, that I may be reprimanded. If I had not gone by that schooner I should have had no other chance for three or four months, as it is the hurricane season now, and ships stay in harbour till April. Of course I go on to New Zealand at once, but while I write this I have had no answer to my telegram to Sir A. G. Meanwhile, I have not heard from home for six months, and don't see how I can get my letters for two more. Of course I am anxious to know if you are all well and flourishing. Meanwhile, I find Sydney and Sydney folk very agreeable and kind, Lord Augustus particularly so.

Of course you have heard of the innumerable and horrible murders now going on in the South Seas. Poor Bower was a most charming fellow. It is impossible to describe the indignation and rage there is in Sydney about them. These colonies have taken upon themselves to censure the High Commissioner, and as one of the three Deputy Commissioners I expect instructions from the High Commissioner which may prolong my stay here.

I was the whole of yesterday in conversation with Lord Augustus. I told him that my opinion was that if traders went with their eyes open to these places merely for their own gain, they did not deserve the protection of their Government, and that

it was better for the Government to say that they would not protect them, than that they could not, which is in reality the case. However, I suppose that people at home do not interest themselves much about South Sea islanders, though perhaps, now that the captain of a man-of-war has been killed, they may begin to do so.

I should be staying at Government House now, but that I had to refuse on account of the state of my wardrobe, which is more suited to Rotumah than Sydney.

February 13, 1881.

As the mail goes to-morrow, I will bring this enormous letter to an end. I got a telegram last night from the High Commissioner, by which it appears that he is uncommonly glad I have left Rotumah, as he wants me in New Zealand. I understand that we are to pay a visit to the great prophet of the Maories, "Te Whiti." As I hear, however, that Lady Gordon is expected on or about the 10th of March at Melbourne, I shall offer to wait to bring her over to N.Z., and I think H.E. will probably wish me to do so.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW ZEALAND,
February 23, 1881.

I think I shall like the life here. Though this is always called the finest climate in the world, I feel it awfully cold after Fiji. Wellington is supposed to be the windiest place in the world; in fact, it blows a gale of wind every day. A Wellington man may always be told by the way he turns a corner, holding his hat on. I can't tell you much of the life as yet, but there seems to be very little work here for a private secretary. Our chief use is to lay foundation-stones, cut first sods, receive addresses, and go to the opera in state. I think we are going to make a trip through the South Islands almost immediately, but it is possible that I shall go with Knollys to meet Lady Gordon at Melbourne, in which case we should pass through Auckland on the way.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, MELBOURNE,
March 28, 1881.

I send a short line from here per *Cotopaxi;* Knollys and I are waiting for Lady Gordon and party, who arrive about the end of the week. We then go overland to Sydney, where they catch a boat for Wellington. I shall probably have to stay about ten days in Sydney before I start on my cruise.

Melbourne is very gay just now, and the Exhibition is decidedly not bad. It has, however, been rather a shock to most of the Victoria colonists, who have lived up to the present time under the impression that the colony of Victoria is far ahead of the rest of the world in manufactures and arts. Now that they have discovered that the London and Paris tradesmen are at least equal to the Melbourne tradesmen in the quality of their goods, they begin to regret the enormous protective duties.

We have been making a procession, or what the papers call a Vice-regal tour, through the South Island of New Zealand. It was very dull; every little town of half a dozen houses has a mayor and corporation. They presented interminable addresses. Dunedin is rather a fine town. At Invercargill they displayed their loyalty at a banquet by singing "For he's a jolly good fellow," when the Governor's health was drunk. At the Bluff, which is the most southern point, Knollys and I left them and took the steamer to Hobart. Our passage was so uncomfortable, that we left the boat at Hobart and took the train across to Launceston, where we caught another boat for Melbourne, which was worse than the first. I could quite fancy myself in England in Tasmania. The country is being much enclosed, and looks very like English country.

COMMODORE'S HOUSE, SYDNEY,
April 12, 1881.

This is in all probability my last letter to you for a longish time, as I sail in a week for the Solomons, and I have just spent a fortnight in Melbourne, where we went to meet Lady Gordon, and where, to my surprise, I met R. and six other fellows who were known on board as the conspirators.

Roughly, my plans are, to sail in the *Cormorant* straight for Ugi, an island in the Solomons, where there will always be a big ship as a head station. From there I go all round the Solomons and investigate the relations between whites and natives. Then my connection with the *Cormorant* ceases, and I go on board the *Beagle*, commanded by an old friend of mine, Maturin by name. He has orders to take me wherever I wish to go. I have, however, not much choice, as I have orders to go to various parts of New Guinea and to inspect New Britain and New Ireland thoroughly. If I have time, I should like then to visit the Marquesas, Ellice, Phœnix, and Caroline groups. I am not tied down to time, so I hope I may be able to do so. Then, when I have finished, Maturin lands me at Cooktown, from which place I take the Torres Straits mail, and go back to New Zealand. I have received a most complimentary despatch from the High Commissioner, approving most completely of my work in Rotumah, and giving reasons why he

has selected me for this particular service. He has also, as Consul General, appointed me a Vice-Consul for the Western Pacific, so that I now hold three appointments under him. The Commodore says I ought to get through it in three months, but I think five is nearer the mark.

H.M.S. "CORMORANT," UGI, SOLOMON ISLANDS,
May 4, 1881.

I won't write you a long letter now, for the ship I send this in does not sail for six weeks, so I shall probably have a better chance later on. This is a lovely little place. The abundance of orchids, crotons, and ferns in the bush is magnificent. The natives, however, are far from what I would wish. They will have nothing to do with us, and are as sulky and generally unpleasant as they dare to be with two men-of-war at anchor opposite their town. We shoot a great deal, and are all collecting birds and slugs, &c., for a naturalist we have on board. We are all supposed to have found new beasts, and I shall undoubtedly be handed down to fame by having a slug called after me. I go on from here to New Ireland, and after that coast round New Guinea from Astrolabe Gulf to the Fly River. If you look at a chart you will see this comprises about 1200 miles of the coast. I am anxious to ascend the Fly River, but my jurisdiction

only goes as far as longitude 143°, so I can't go very far.

We shall be the first man-of-war which has visited Astrolabe Gulf. I am much excited with the account of a tribe in New Guinea with tails. If I can get one of them I shall bring him home and exhibit him at the Westminster Aquarium. I feel it useless writing any more, as this letter can't reach you for six months. I will telegraph from Cooktown; a useless piece of information, as you will get the telegram long before this letter.

[*EXTRACT FROM NOTE-BOOK.*]

Arrived at Blanche Bay, May 13th, after a very fine run from Ugi of six days. I have been unable to write from having been on my back for the last five days, and at present it seems to me that I may not be able to get about again for a long time. We found ourselves forty miles to the westward on Friday morning, which we had to make up; we did not therefore expect to get in till after dark. We had, however, such a fine breeze and such calm water that we were at anchor at 5.30, opposite the German trader's house. It was very thick and hazy coming in, which I believe it almost always is here, owing to two active volcanoes, one on each side of the bay. The bay, besides being a very snug little harbour, is also the prettiest place I have seen in

the islands. We were much astonished at the size of the trader's house and the appearance of civilisation, and even luxury, about everything. He has a little steamer and a cutter opposite his house. After dinner he came off to smoke a pipe with us. He said he was very glad we had come, as the natives were getting very threatening in their attitude towards the whites. Kleinschmidt, the German naturalist, had been murdered about a fortnight before our arrival, while Mrs. Kleinschmidt had come to Blanche Bay for safety. From the story that we hear here, there is no doubt that he must have brought it upon himself, and in a manner which one can hardly believe in a man who understood natives as well as Kleinschmidt did. He had bought a small island near the Duke of York, and paid one chief a certain amount of trade for it. As a matter of course, the island did not belong to the chief, but to a tribe, and the tribe did not consider that they had sold it, whatever the chief did. Accordingly, they not only continued picking cocoa-nuts there, but objected to Kleinschmidt doing so too. On this Kleinschmidt sent them a message that he would shoot any one picking cocoa-nuts there, and went over there with two of his men. While there they were all three killed.

May 15.

Maturin and Hernsheim* have gone off in the yacht to a small island five miles off to shoot pigeons. The men and women wear nothing here, notwithstanding which every one says that they are the only modest people in the Pacific. If a woman, whether married or single, displays the least impropriety of conduct she is instantly killed. A man has to buy his wife from her relations, and pays as much as £5 in trade for her.

This seems to be a very unhealthy place. Hernsheim says that he has thirty traders in the group, and that they seldom live more than a year. This place, Matupi, is the best of the lot.

May 16.

Mrs. Kleinschmidt came off to see me, but did not tell me much that I did not know before.

About nine o'clock we weighed and made sail for the Duke of York, distant about fifteen miles. We beat out of Blanche Bay and got to the entrance of Duke of York harbour. Each place seems prettier than the last to me.

* The trader previously referred to.—Ed.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

H.M.S. "BEAGLE," BLANCHE BAY, NEW BRITAIN,
May 21, 1881.

A line from here in haste. I have been busy trying men for murder. A smaller crime than murder is nothing accounted of here. I have actually eleven of them on my hands, so you may imagine I am rather busy.

This is a lovely place, active volcanoes, sulphur mountains, boiling rivers, lagoons with nasty smelling waters, earthquakes, islands rising out of the sea in a night and disappearing again next night, and the most repulsive, treacherous, and bloodthirsty race of head-hunting cannibals in the world. Notwithstanding this and the poisonous climate, I should not mind spending a month or so here. However, we are off to New Hanover in a day or two, and thence to the Admiralties in company with another war schooner, *The Conflict*. It is regular yachting for me, as I can go just where I like. Maturin, too, is a very good fellow. In two months I think I shall find myself in Cooktown.

I suppose all these places are a mystery to you, but if you buy a nautical chart of the Western Pacific you will see them marked down better than on the map.

So far I have been very well,* and hope to continue so to the end of the cruise. One does not have much risk of fever on board, and I never sleep ashore. I never even go ashore without taking a large dose of quinine.

Probably my telegram from Cooktown will reach you before this letter.

H.M.S. "Beagle," Port Webber, New Britain,
May 29, 1881.

. . . . Just time for a line by a German schooner going I know not where. I am hard at work catching assassins. I found one poor fellow, L., had been murdered two days before I got to his place. From his papers I see he is a near relation of Lord S., so please forward the enclosed letter, which is merely relating the facts of the case. I enclose another letter to V., whom I used to know, also telling him about it. No doubt you can find out his address. We sail for the Admiralties to-morrow, where I hope to get many "curios." At New Guinea I have to make many inquiries on various subjects, but as I have failed in getting an interpreter they will have to be made by means of pantomime. I am enjoying my trip so far very much. The heat and the reflection from the water

* This statement is directly contradicted by the entries in his note-book, and is obviously made only to allay a mother's anxiety. —Ed.

in this small craft is awful. Notwithstanding the quantity of adipose matter in a state of solution which I leave behind me wherever I go, I believe I am growing fat.

This is a very short letter, but it may not arrive for years, so I won't make it longer.

H.M.S. "BEAGLE," NEW BRITAIN,
May 29, 1881.

MY DEAR M.,—I am writing this in latitude 4°, and the clammy dews are standing on my forehead. Society is sadly backward here, neither the gentlemen nor the ladies wear *anything*. I am bound to say I follow their example as far as the captain will allow me. Society in the Solomon Islands is still stranger. While we were at anchor there a ship came in without the captain. I went on board and asked where he was. The mate told me he had gone ashore to visit a Mrs. M., who is certainly the leader of society there; in fact, she is the only white woman there at all. During the night the ship had been blown off shore, leaving the captain behind. The mate then said, "I don't so much mind leaving the captain behind as he has a boat, but unfortunately he has left his only pair of trousers on board, and I'm afraid he won't like to go on board a man-of-war to see you gentlemen, without them." "But," said we, "has he not gone

to call upon a lady?" "Oh," said the mate, "*she* won't mind; her husband never wears trousers, and there is nothing she hates so much as a man that gives himself airs!" I am certain that if I had called upon Mrs. M. I should have given myself airs. Such is society in the Solomons. When I have got nothing better to do I amuse myself by chopping up little bits of tobacco, and making dusky ladies dive for them. For four sticks of tobacco you may marry into the Royal Family here.

[*EXTRACT FROM REPORT.*]

As I had spent a long time in New Britain and was anxious to complete the rest of my cruise, we determined to leave Port Webber and coast up New Ireland and New Hanover on our way to the Admiralties. I heard that there were some bêche de mer ships at those islands, and I was anxious if possible to fall in with them. Accordingly, on the 29th of May we made sail, leaving Lieutenant Izat at Port Webber in the hopes of Tovalili* being caught. We were, however, delayed by calms and adverse currents, but on the 4th of June we sighted La Vandola, the most eastern island of the Admiralty group. We passed to leeward of it without going in, and steered for Jesus Maria, a large island about forty miles to the westward. I saw absolutely no

* The murderer of Mr. L.—ED.

signs of life or cultivation till we had sailed nearly round the island; but at the northern end we suddenly came in sight of a large village built out into the sea on piles. We hove to as near as we could, and a number of large canoes came out, but would not come close. Looking through the glass we saw a white man standing under the trees on the beach, and firing his gun off to attract our attention. Lieut. Maturin at once sent a boat in, but when she arrived he had disappeared. In the meantime the canoes had come up, and the natives in them began to trade with the most intense eagerness, offering bowls and bundles of spears for hoop-iron and beads. We had to sail round a chain of reefs about eight miles long to get inside the bay and opposite the town, so we determined to put off till to-morrow any further investigations of the white man we had seen, and to get into a safe position for the night. Next morning the boat was sent in very early. When I came on deck a large fleet of canoes was approaching, and presently we were surrounded, six and eight deep, by them. The natives were in a state of the greatest excitement, and at once began trading with our men. They are fine, clean-looking men, and all wear their hair in large red mops. They did not show the smallest fear of us, though I was told later on that the *Dancing Wave* was the only ship which had been to this island before. They wear a carved cowrie shell round their necks, which as a rule they will

not part with on any account, though the chief of the village subsequently gave me his. About 8 A.M. the boat returned, having on board a white man named Donald Dow. He was the boatswain of the *Dancing Wave*, and had been ashore for five weeks buying bêche de mer. He told me he had got upwards of £600's worth even in that short time, so the fishery must be extremely rich. He said that his life had been attempted many times during that period, but the chief had stood his friend throughout. A few days before our arrival, an expedition had been sent from La Vandola to take his life, but the people he was living amongst turned out in a body and drove them off. As there were no white men living in the group, I did not feel justified in visiting any of the other islands as I should have liked, and so soon as Donald Dow had told me all he knew, which was very little, we made sail once more, steering for Astrolabe Bay on the N.E. coast of New Guinea.

Though the distance is not great, it took us six days to get there, as we had little else but calms. We anchored in a tiny little bay called Port Constantine. I was much impressed by the magnificence of the scenery. The mountains appear to rise abruptly out of the sea to the height of 14,000 feet, and on the day of our arrival were absolutely free from clouds. My desire was to find out, if possible, if the *Courier* had ever been there, if the party in her had bought any land, and if so, what considera-

tion they had given for it; also, whether the accounts of the abundance of sugar and tobacco and scented woods were true. I had been absolutely unable to procure any interpreter, but Baron Maclay had taught me a few words of the language, and had shown me some signs which they would understand. Accordingly, when the canoes came round the ship, I told them I was "Maclay's brother," and asked after their chiefs by name. This did not seem to astonish them at all. I asked to see their towns, and told them I would go with a chief named Sa-ul on the following day. In the afternoon Lieutenant Maturin and I had a most beautiful walk in the bush. There was a richness of vegetation which I had never seen before, and which I had not imagined possible. The next day, June 12th, about 9 A.M., Sa-ul came off to the ship, and was shown over it. After staying on board about two hours, he said he wished to take us to his town, Gorendu, so we got into the boat and pulled about two miles down the bay, where we landed. Lieutenant Maturin and I then walked up to the town with him, which was a considerable distance inland; but when we got there we found it deserted, though we could hear the natives talking all round us in the bush. After a short time, however, they regained their courage, and came into the town, when we all sat down. As far as I could make out, only two ships had been there before, but what their names were I could not find out, nor how long ago they had left. I think I

made myself understood in asking if any land had been sold to white men, and I received a most emphatic denial. I saw absolutely no articles of European manufacture among them, which I probably should have done had any land been bought. Sa-ul, moreover, said that on the occasions of ships visiting Astrolabe Bay, he had run into the bush, so at all events he can have been no party to any such transaction. In fact, I cannot find that the *Courier* ever went there at all; but if she did she can have had no dealings with Sa-ul, who is the most powerful chief in the bay. There is no doubt that the country must be very rich, and I should think not unhealthy at that particular spot. There are numerous small rivers, with wide-spreading plains on either side, which look very fertile, and the mountain range is so short a distance from the sea, and its height is so enormous, that any change of temperature could be obtained. I have no doubt this part of New Guinea might be colonised by rich men with profit to themselves, but I have also no doubt that it would be an act of injustice to the natives to allow a single white man to force himself upon them. Baron Maclay has assured me that they would never consent to alienate their land, and that any forcible appropriation of it would be resented to the utmost. I trust that, in the event of any attempt being made to put this colonisation scheme into practice, Your Excellency will send a commissioner to look after the interests of the natives. The natives have a Jewish

appearance, and are not bad-looking men. I think, however, Mr. Wallace must be wrong when he says they are not true Papuans, but a colony from some of the islands. They have precisely the same appearance as the south-east coast natives, who are described by him as being true Papuans. He also gives as a reason for supporting his theory, that the Astrolabe Bay natives neither use bows nor make pottery. I never saw a man there who had not got a bow and some arrows in his hand, and I saw plenty of pottery and some women making it.

On the 13th June we made sail, intending to coast down to the Louisiade Archipelago, but after trying to beat through Dampier Straits for a week, we gave up all idea of going that way, and determined to go round by New Britain again, and down St. George's Channel. On the 2nd July we arrived at the Duke of York, having had nothing but heavy gales and calms. About a week after leaving Astrolabe Bay we discovered a small island not down in the charts. At the Duke of York we found the *Conflict*, but Lieutenant Izat had not been able to catch Tovalili. As the cruise had already taken longer than was intended, we were anxious to get on to Teste Island. We were unfortunately weather-bound in Makada for three days, and so it was not till the 8th of July that we were able to make a start. We were six days beating down the channel in a gale of wind, and on the 16th of July we made Woodlark Island. This is a large island,

situated to the northward of the Louisiades. It took us three days to get round it. We did not go ashore, but several canoes full of natives came off to us. They seemed to me to be ordinary Papuans. On the 18th we weathered the island, and on the 19th we got into the Louisiades and on to the top of a large shoal, which it took us nearly the whole day to get off. In the evening we anchored at a little island called Mudge, and next day (the 20th) we anchored at Teste Island. We left the Louisiade Archipelago on the 23rd, and arrived at Cooktown on the 29th of July.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

COOKTOWN, QUEENSLAND,
July 29, 1881.

No doubt long ere this reaches you, you will have got my wire from here. I have no time to attempt any account of my cruise. It has been an adventurous one in many ways, but what I propose doing during my ten days' journey to Sydney from this place is to make a copy of my rough journal for you, with copies of various private letters and despatches showing the object of my voyage and the result. I am not wholly dissatisfied with this latter. I think, in the absence of any interpreters, I could have done no more than I did. My journal is not intended be a full record of my doings, but only

very reluctantly to say I was not up to it. The place I am going to at Waiwera, I believe is rather good fun. It is conducted on a sort of one big family principle, by a Miss Campbell. She introduces you to every one, and her word is absolute law in the matter of having to turn over music or holding skeins of wool, &c. Then, I believe, there is strolling on the sands by moonlight. However, the nominal attraction to me is a boiling mineral water they have there, which the doctors say will work wonders. I don't much believe in it, but as they won't let me go to Wellington, I would rather stay with Miss Campbell than in an Auckland hotel.

To my horror, the Governor is having my report printed. It is far the worst I have ever made, being written under the influence of liver, and there is very little information in it. However, he says he is satisfied, which is more than I am.

Have just lunched with H.E. He wanted me to go to Havannah Harbour in the New Hebrides. Nothing will be done till he comes back, by which time I shall know if I am up to the work or no. In any case I won't go to Havannah Harbour, but have suggested Blanche Bay, New Britain, instead. From there I should patrol New Guinea and the Solomons.

I will write more fully from Waiwera.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, NEW ZEALAND,
November 5, 1881.

. . . . I am going home on sick leave, but there is nothing much the matter with me now, though I have undoubtedly had a shave. I still retain my appointment, with increased salary—*i.e.*, £500 per annum; and I fully expect to be all right in less than a year. We keep very much to ourselves, and the day is rapidly approaching when no one in the colony will speak to us,* though that fact does not weigh heavily on our minds. About half an hour before I began this letter a telegram arrived, saying that the arrest of Te Whiti and the two other chiefs had been accomplished quietly and without fighting, but now that their restraining influence is taken away, I am afraid fighting must come in a day or two. However, I won't talk New Zealand politics, though my own movements are a good deal affected by them.

I gave a lecture here at the New Zealand Institute, with the Governor in the chair. The report has not been published, but I send a short notice of it. The implements and weapons which I exhibited at the same time will, I hope, eventually reach England.

The lecture on the whole was a success, though I had to suppress official matters and references to

* Owing to differences of opinion as to the treatment of the Maori landowners.—ED.

missionaries, &c. The audience were chiefly scientific men, which made me rather nervous, but as I knew no one had ever visited most of the places before me, I felt pretty safe from contradiction. I have three passages home offered to me in men-of-war if I could only wait three months, but that I can't do.

I come home as Deputy Commissioner, not Private Secretary.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ISLANDS REVISITED.

AFTER a year's leave at home, Romilly again sailed from London for Australia on March 15th, 1883, and after an uneventful voyage arrived in Sydney on the 2nd May. Here he met Commodore Erskine, who gave him a passage on board H.M.S. *Nelson* for Fiji, where he arrived on May 29th. There being no ship of war available to take him on his second cruise of inspection among the islands, he chartered a labour vessel, the *Meg Merrilies*, and on July 26th, 1883, he arrived on board her in Blanche Bay, New Britain, after having visited the New Hebrides *en route*, and calling at most of the principal islands. The following extract from a note of his made subsequently gives some idea of the sort of life he was now leading and the difficulties he here had to contend with.

"In New Britain I was put on shore without a house to live in, or a boat to get about in, with very few provisions, and no means of communication with the outer world. Owing to the kindness of a German trader, I was able to live in his house.

After residing there some two months, during which time I had one sharp attack of fever, I chartered a schooner to take me to the north coast of New Ireland. My intention was to follow the tracks of the labour ships, and explain personally to the natives what they would have to expect should they ship to Queensland. Leaving the schooner at Neusa, the most northern cape of New Ireland, I went down a great part of the east coast of New Ireland, and visited some places previously unknown. I gathered a large concourse of natives together at Kapsu, and explained to them the existing regulations which governed the labour trade. At this place I was present at a large native battle, and was a witness of the cannibalistic orgies which succeeded it."

He seems to have stayed in or about New Britain till the beginning of November, when he sailed on board H.M.S. *Diamond* for Port Moresby in New Guinea, visiting the Laughlan Islands *en route* to inquire into an outrage that had been committed there.

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY,
May 18, 1883.

The mail comes in to-day, so I begin a letter before it comes. I sail to-morrow in H.M.S. *Nelson* with the Commodore, for Fiji. From there I expect to go on a six months' cruise all over the place in the

Espiègle, but I am not sure of this. There is a lot of nasty work, in the shape of hanging, to be done; in fact, the islands are worse than ever. The Commodore and I get on capitally together. Most of my old sailor friends have gone home, but the new lot seem very good fellows.

I don't know in the least where to have my letters forwarded to—I suppose it must be Fiji. We go to Norfolk Island on our way there, which I shall be rather glad of.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FIJI,
June 20, 1883.

Our regular means of communication with Sydney are stopped, so the time for writing is uncertain. My plans are a little changed since I last wrote to you. Le Hunte has gone off in the *Espiègle* instead of me, as they did not know the time I was going to arrive here.

I have now made up my mind to see something of the labour trade, and am therefore going to make a cruise in some labour ship. I shall probably work my way northwards to New Britain, changing from one labour ship to another as may be convenient. I hear there is a house which I may be able to rent there. It is hardly worth while, however, talking of what I am going to do, as my plans may be changed at any moment. I have been away for ten

days' shooting with four of the *Nelson's*. We had a very pleasant trip and good sport.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, FIJI,
July 8, 1883.

. . . .

Our mail has just come in. She ought to have brought me six weeks' mails from Sydney, but alas! not a single letter have I got, and other people are in the same case. We can't explain it. My plans change daily, but I think it is decided now that I should charter a ship for three months. Most of my time would be spent in the New Hebrides, where many troubles, both French and native, are going on. There is no ship of war for me to go in. Considering the amount of work on the station, it is very badly supplied with ships.

I don't think I told you that we called at Norfolk Island on the way here. We got there on the Queen's birthday, and fired twenty-one guns opposite the settlement. Then we landed, a work of much danger, and dined in state with Mr. H. Nobbs, an old man of about ninety. The old convict prison was most interesting. We were supplied with ponies, and rode all over the island. It is a lovely place, and I was very glad to see it.

MATUPI, NEW BRITAIN,
August 26, 1883.

I am expecting a chance of sending a letter per *Espiègle*. In the meantime, through some mistake of the Sydney P.O., I have only had one letter from you since I left home, and I don't see much chance of getting any till the end of the year now, when I take my three months' holiday. I am living here with a really good fellow, the German Consul for the Pacific. His name is Hernsheim. He has a very large establishment here, and is by profession a Sea Island merchant—that is to say, he collects pearl-shell, tortoise-shell, bêche de mer, copra, &c., and sends them to Sydney and Hong Kong. He has offered to give me a passage with himself in one of his ships at the end of the year to Hong Kong, and to put me up while there, after which we should both come back together. It sounds a pleasant plan enough. Hong Kong may sound a long way off to you, but in distance from here it is not much further than Sydney, while in time it is nearer. If you see Lord Walsingham at any time, you might tell him that I have not forgotten his wish with respect to my getting him "micro-lepidoptera," but it is a most difficult job. However, a wing or two, a few antennæ, and some broken legs may eventually reach England.

My present abode has the advantage of being healthy, but it is about the only healthy spot in the

country. Along the coast there is a most severe jungle fever, which kills off traders and missionaries at a great pace. I think that in the daytime one is not liable to catch it. At all events, we always sleep here, and our establishment has no sickness. The richness of vegetation is wonderful, as you may suppose in 5° south. The great drawback to the place is the rush of ships to get labour for the Queensland plantations. I believe they all kidnap more or less, and there have been some very bad cases. The result is that wretched traders, living by themselves in spots visited by these ships, get murdered out of revenge by the natives.

We have two houses here, one in which we sleep, and the other one, which is exposed to the trade wind, where we have our meals and work. The whole station is surrounded by a strong wall ten feet high. We watch at night, however, as the natives the other night committed a most daring burglary, and took a lot of our things. They are, however, a better class of natives here than anywhere else, but they would still stand a good deal of improvement without being quite perfect. I am expecting the *Dart* soon to take me to New Guinea, and I shall probably be away about six weeks. I must shut up for the present, will add more when the *Espiègle* comes in.

MATUPI, NEW BRITAIN,
August 28, 1883.

MY DEAR M.,—I think last time I wrote to you was from Fiji, saying that I was going to N.Z. to charter a ship. I had to give up that plan, because I found a ship in Fiji to bring me here. I am at work again in the old manner, and I find I am just as fond of the work as ever, and that the freshness has not worn off yet. The natives here are real brutes. They have regular murder societies, and are generally unpleasant people. I shoot a good deal—wallaby, cassowaries, iguanas, crocodiles, and megapodes being the game. Just opposite my house, not a mile off, is an active volcano, but fortunately there is an arm of the sea between us.

I am organising an expedition, the object of which is the ascent of a mountain called Mount Beautemps Beaupré. I don't know why I am doing this, as I hate climbing mountains, but it is a long way in the interior, and that is still terra incognita, and probably curiosity is as much the reason as anything else. I have heard of extraordinary temples in the bush, and I possess some wonderful carvings which came from one, so I am anxious to see them.

that time he had not set foot in the country. My notes are not sufficient for a paper on New Guinea yet, but they shortly may be. My paper on New Britain and another on New Ireland will, I think, interest people if they ever see them in a magazine.*

PORT MORESBY, NEW GUINEA,
November 20, 1883.

We have been here some time. On arriving we found no mails at all, a great disappointment. The country here is dried up and miserable-looking. I stay here by Chalmers's invitation till the end of the year. There is not much business to do, so I am going to collect material for a report on the rights of property and how it is held.

The explorers have departed with their tails between their legs, and some Papuan spears in the small of their backs. M. deserved his failure, as he left his camp unguarded and his tobacco lying about for two days while he climbed a hill. On his return, extraordinary to relate, it (the tobacco) was gone.

I have had a pleasant cruise in the *Diamond*.

* These papers were unfortunately lost, but H. R. again collected his materials as to N. Britain into a paper which he read before the Royal Geographical Society in January 1887.—ED.

Dale wants me to go to Sydney with him, but I have decided not to leave before the end of the year. This gives me six weeks, during which time I propose visiting with Chalmers about 400 miles of coast. We first visit a tribe of Amazons Chalmers says that they are very beautiful, but ten years in New Guinea may possibly alter a man's standard of beauty.

CHAPTER XII.

CROWN PROSECUTIONS.

THE projects referred to in the last letter were not destined to be fulfilled on this occasion. After a stay of ten days only at Port Moresby, Romilly was compelled to leave New Guinea on account of there being no means of living there for him. In the beginning of December 1883 he proceeded to Thursday Island, and thence south to Sydney and Melbourne. He seems to have taken a short holiday in Australia in January 1884, as appears from the two following letters written to his mother about this time.

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY,
January 8, 1884.

. . . . As you see, I am again in civilisation. I had a most terrible trip from Port Moresby to Thursday in a little thirty-ton schooner. Barring a hurricane I was out in in the *Emerald*, I never saw such a gale as we tumbled into. We were battened down and hove to for two days. Of course that meant

nothing but wet biscuit to eat, and no change of clothes. The most exciting part was drifting by extraordinary luck through a passage in the Barrier Reef. At Thursday Island I found the Chesters hospitably inclined, which was fortunate, as I had to stay there ten days. He is, I think, a very good fellow, and has been maligned to me. I was much interested in the pearl-shell fishery there. I found that the best divers in the Straits were my old Rotumah friends. From there I went to Brisbane in a China steamer, with accommodation for twelve saloon passengers. This did not prevent them from taking fifty-six, rather a tight fit. The attractions of Brisbane were so great that I stayed there a fortnight. I leave here to-morrow for Melbourne *en route* for Tasmania.*

I want a complete change of climate, though I am perfectly well. I stay there with one H., a judge. He is going to give me snipe-shooting to my heart's content. I am treated, I must say, very well in the colonies. Free passes for Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmanian railways, honorary membership of all the clubs, besides invitations innumerable. I stayed with the Musgraves while at Brisbane. When I reach Tasmania I shall have travelled 2500 miles for a holiday. By the way, at a very swell luncheon given on board a new steamer at Brisbane, I had to make a speech

* Tasmania had to be given up, as will be seen.—ED.

and return thanks to the toast of "Literature." Fancy the "True Story" placing me in such a proud position as this! A. never let me hear the last of it. You know that I have placed my services at the disposal of the leader of any expedition to New Guinea, sent by the Geographical, as well as those of Mr. Chalmers. I have done this by private letters to the C. O. I have also asked to be supplied with the means of furnishing a report on the country, which I could do, I estimate, for £2000. The geographical expedition is, I see, to cost £6000. If they grant my request, which I doubt, I should keep Chalmers with me, as without him any expedition must be a failure. The conceit of these so-called explorers makes me very angry. They do not perform as much as it is my every-day duty to do, but the papers are full of their hardships and of the glorious results which they have *not* achieved. I think newspaper expeditions are always wrong, and should not be allowed.

LINDISFERN, MORRISONS,
January 23, 1884.

Just a line about nothing in particular, to let you know that I am alive and well. I have been staying here for some time, and enjoying myself very much. It is a racing establishment, and one of the most successful in Australia.

We go out riding every day on the top of tall racehorses, and generally have a very good time. My hostess is known as the Lily of Victoria, and is undoubtedly about the prettiest woman in Australia. To-morrow we have a huge riding party to Ballarat, which is about thirty miles from here. Six girls from one house, eight from another, about the same number from here, and only four unfortunate men to keep them all in order. The weather is awfully cold. We have huge fires all over the house, and this is the middle of summer. An Australian house is very elastic. This house is not big, there being only three bedrooms in it. Nevertheless, we are a party of twelve here. People are certainly very jolly in the bush. We all galloped over to a ball the other night, about six miles off. We danced till daybreak, and then women and men all had shake-downs wherever they could find room to put one. This probably rather shocks your English ideas, but there seems no sort of impropriety in it in Australia.

I have given up going to Tasmania. The weather is quite cold enough here, and I am having a very good time. I shall have to go back, too, in about a month, probably to New Guinea. I wish they would make up their minds about that place.

So Lord Normanby has at last resigned. He will be a great loss to the colony.

Shortly after the date of the last letter, Romilly was recalled to Brisbane to give evidence

charges, and in my brother being complimented on his action in the case.

Leaving Fiji, on the 14th of August, Romilly was back in Sydney on the 25th, after calling at New Caledonia on the way. Being now within telegraphic range of England, he was instructed to remain in Sydney for a time to watch events, and here accordingly he stayed till the 23rd of September, when H.M.S. *Harrier* having been put at his disposal for two months by the Commodore, he sailed on board that ship for Cooktown, there to await orders as to the part he was to play in the forthcoming proclamation of the British Protectorate in New Guinea, which had in the meantime been decided upon by the Home Government. The letter to his mother that follows must have been written just before the arrival of instructions.

H.M.S. "HARRIER," COOKTOWN,
October 2, 1884.

Here I am waiting to go off again to New Guinea, but we are waiting for orders from home, which never arrive. There is an idea in Australia that I am to have the New Guinea appointment, and some of the papers are very indignant. The terms of abuse employed by the papers are very amusing. The Cooktown *Independent* this morning calls me—why, I don't know—"a pitiful scion of baronetcy, a

relation of a red-tape Downing Street functionary!" Our recent action in the McMurdo-Davies case has made me thoroughly hated at Queensland, and also my connection with Sir Arthur Gordon. However, we manage to exist in spite of their furious language.

The lieutenant of this ship is one "Tubby E." Tubby is probably a local name, having reference to his figure. The captain is also very tubby, as he weighs 22 stone. He has quite taken Cooktown by storm, with balls and picnics every day. The natives of New Guinea displayed the utmost consternation at his appearance, but finally men came from great distances to beg hairs from his beard to wave over their yams, expecting thereby to vastly increase their size.

This is a comfortable little ship, having once been a yacht, and, strange to say, the dockyard people have left most of the yacht fittings in her. We ought to have a comfortable cruise. I expect to be away about six weeks only, as we carry only sixty days' provisions.

The looked-for instructions arrived while Romilly was waiting in the *Harrier* at Cooktown. They were contained in a somewhat vaguely worded cablegram from the Colonial Office, and ordered him to proceed at once to New Guinea to proclaim the Protectorate. Having some doubts as to the meaning of the message, he referred it to the

Governor of New South Wales, Lord Augustus Loftus, asking for his advice. Not receiving any reply, however, he decided to start at once for New Guinea, assuming, not unnaturally, that it was intended that he should himself perform the ceremony of the Proclamation, as appears from the following letter.

H.M.S. "HARRIER," COOKTOWN,
October 17, 1884.

Just a line to say that we sail to-day for New Guinea. I am to have the honour of announcing the British Protectorate. I expect to be back in six weeks, when doubtless we shall hear who the Protector is to be. He will have little to protect except his own skin. A ship came in to-day with an account of a treacherous attack on them. I have been here a fortnight now, and have been exploring the upper waters of the Endeavour River, shooting ducks and pigeons.

The papers continue abusing me. They say I am unfitted by nature to protect white men.

This is only a scrawl to let you hear from me by the last possible mail; so good-bye, as I have a lot to do.

CHAPTER XIII.

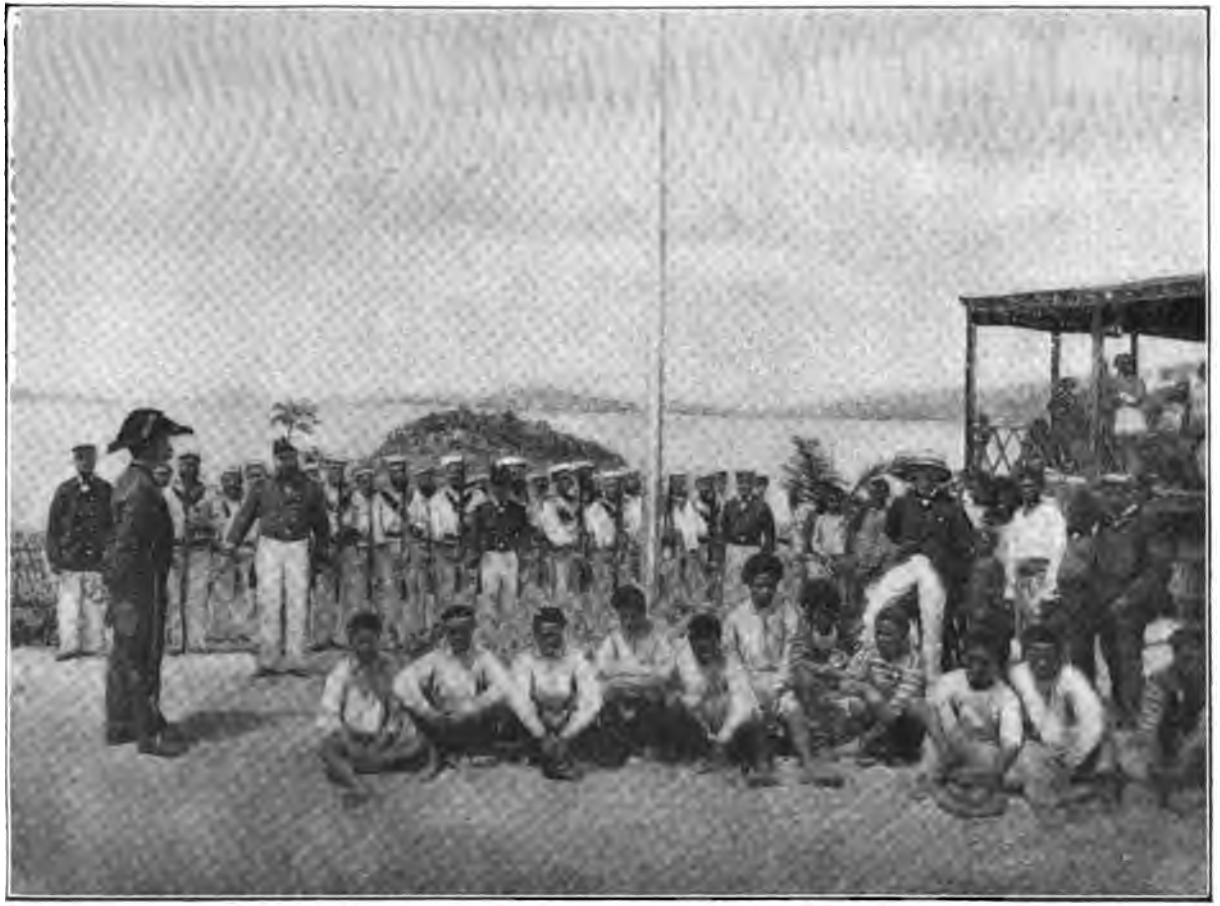
IN CHARGE AT NEW GUINEA.

THE *Harrier* arrived at Port Moresby in New Guinea on the 21st October, and on the 23rd Romilly, acting as he thought in accordance with his instructions, hoisted the British flag, and issued a proclamation defining the limits of the Protectorate. A few days afterwards Commodore Erskine with four ships of war appeared on the scene, to perform the same ceremony on a bigger scale, and found the British flag already flying. Obviously there had been some misunderstanding of instructions, so the ceremony had to be repeated; but the irregularity, if there was one, does not seem to have been noticed by the Papuan people, who would no doubt have raised no objection to the same ceremony being performed regularly once a week on the same terms. The next three letters are to his mother from New Guinea, where Romilly was left temporarily in charge of the Protectorate.

PORT MORESBY,
November 11, 1884.

It may interest you to know that we have just finished hoisting the flag here, and a very imposing ceremony it was. I made rather an ass of myself, or rather other people made an ass of me, as I received a telegram from Lord Derby, giving me the limits of the Protectorate and other information about it, while I was kept in utter ignorance that the Commodore was coming up here with orders to hoist the flag himself.

We therefore came up here and did it before the Commodore arrived. However, it did not make much difference, as he did it all over again when he arrived. There were five ships here for the ceremony—viz., *Nelson*, *Espiègle*, *Raven*, *Swinger*, and *Harrier*—and between them they landed an imposing force of blue-jackets and marines, who fired repeated *feux de joie* and made us stand bareheaded in a frightful sun. I don't think I was ever so hot in my life, and we were very glad when it was over. The natives, who are beginning to get accustomed to seeing the flag hoisted, were apathetic, and only a few stragglers turned up. The distribution of knives and tobacco on the preceding day amused them far more. The day before the ceremony we held a big palaver on board the flag ship, and I was formally introduced to several old acquaintances. A gigantic copper of rice jam and brown sugar, mixed



PROCLAIMING THE QUEEN'S PROTECTORATE IN NEW GUINEA

From a photograph

To face p. 202

together, was produced. For a rather delicate stomach, as mine was on that day, it was a truly beastly sight. It was supposed that the same importance was attached to rice and brown sugar by the Papuans that is attached to bread and salt by the Arabs, but I have doubts about this. Each chief was given a sign of office—namely, a very nice black stick with a florin let into the top with the Queen's head up—rather a nice idea. Good photographs of everything have been taken by a Sydney man whom the Commodore brought up, and I have ordered a complete set to be sent to you.

Meanwhile, I am to be left in charge of the Protectorate with two ships. This is a step, but I don't know what it will lead to.

PORT MORESBY,
November 24, 1884.

There is an opportunity of writing *viâ* Thursday Island, so I send you a line. I am left here alone now in charge of the new Protectorate, not a very weighty charge up to the present. I have just made an exploration up the Edith River in our steam cutter, and a very pleasant trip it was. My ostensible reason for going was to inspect some cedar country, where there had been some trees felled. My real object was to shoot. We found the natives very numerous, but very friendly. The shooting

was splendid—geese, ducks, ibis, the big crested pigeon, and many other sorts of birds. We got up into a perfect network of rivers, and the scenery looking up into the barren Stanley range was magnificent. We were finally stopped by shallow water and snags. The little *Harrier* is a comfortable little craft. We have had a change of captains up here. Capt. Pike has taken the place of Capt. Wilcox. As he is a very "strict service" man, accustomed to big ships, he was rather startled at the size of his new command. There is really no work for me to do here, as I can only leave Port Moresby for a few days at a time, and as all the missionaries are away with the Commodore hoisting flags innumerable, it is rather dull. We have horses, however, and occasionally go wallaby shooting. As this ship has to go almost immediately to Sydney to recommission, I expect to be transferred to either the *Raven* or *Swinger* very shortly. I am beginning to learn the language a little, but it is slow work without instructors.

PORT MORESBY,
December 13, 1884.

Life goes on slowly here, but not unpleasantly. The rainy season is just coming on, so we shall be in a Turkish bath for the next four months. I have just returned from a three days' trip inland, which I

enjoyed very much. We took no food, but depended on our guns, which served us very well, as they always do in this country.

The wholesale German annexations were to be expected, I think, but they seem to have taken every one by surprise. No doubt they are the proper people to annex New Britain and Ireland, as they have large interests there, and we have none. I pity the natives, however, under German rule. I am now transferred to the *Swinger* for ten days, as the *Raven* goes to Cooktown to telegraph the German annexations. As far as Australia is concerned, I think they are infinitely worse off now with all these German colonies close at hand, than if they had allowed poor New Guinea to stay as it was. No doubt they will be furious.

I am staying a good deal with Chalmers, who treats me like a prince.

The unhealthiness of the climate during the rainy season soon began to tell even upon a naturally very strong constitution, and asserted itself in the usual form of fever. Partly on this account, and partly for the reasons given in the next letter, Romilly left New Guinea at the end of 1884, and arrived early in January 1885 back in Cooktown. Sir Peter Scratchley (then Major-General Scratchley, C.M.G.) had by this time been appointed to be the Queen's Special Commissioner of the newly proclaimed Protectorate, and by the same commission Romilly was

appointed to act as Special Commissioner in the event of Scratchley's death, incapacity, or absence. He still retained his post and salary as Deputy-Commissioner of the Western Pacific, and was also granted a small additional salary out of the funds provided by the colonies for the administration of New Guinea. This explains the allusion in the next letter to serving two masters.

COOKTOWN,

January 8, 1885.

I got here yesterday from New Guinea to telegraph, send despatches, &c. My rise in the world is not a very great one, and it entails serving two masters, but I am glad not to sever my connection with my old office.

If the silly Australians stir up a row with the Germans, which they are trying hard to do, we may soon be drinking the old toast of "a bloody war, and a sickly season." By the terms of his * commission, the Protectorate is handed over to me during his absence from New Guinea.

I have no special adventures to relate to you. A big New Guinea chief commissioned me just before we sailed to bring back a white wife for him from Cooktown. I really believe that many of the Cooktown women would jump at the chance. My name

* Viz., General Scratchley's.—ED.

there is "Gimatouna" — that is, "the great watcher." The Australians are too frantic for words about the German annexations. Lord Derby, in effigy, is suffering many indignities at their hands. It is proposed here that I should be tarred and feathered. The papers having exhausted their powers of abuse without getting any reply from me, are now pitching into my "aristocratic drawl," which they hint I must have picked up from Lord Derby!

The whole thing is very funny. I don't know if the Germans have really stolen a march on us or not, but there is no danger to Australia in their colonising the north coast. There are two impassable mountain ranges between the north and south coasts. Mr. F., proprietor of the *Cooktown Herald*, has announced his intention of asserting Australian rights "at the foot of the throne," in very big capitals. It is to be hoped that he will arrive there decently sober. One can't help laughing at the language, but the situation is serious.

COOKTOWN,

January 23, 1885.

As you see, we are still here, much against my will; but as I have rashly come within range of a telegraph wire, it is my own fault if I can't get away again.

Scratchley seems popular enough in the colonies,

and I look forward to getting on very well with him. This is a most horrible hole, worse than New Guinea. Did you read any account of the *Hopeful* murderers' trial?* The murders were so brutal and the evidence so clear that the jury actually convicted two out of the six. Immediately every newspaper in the country clamours for their acquittal, on the ground that the murdered men were natives; and such tremendous petitions were sent in from every part of the colony that the Governor weakly gave in. I don't think anything has ever shown the state of public opinion in Queensland so strongly before. Only the other day an inspector of police and six native troopers murdered a whole tribe of blacks "for a lark," as was said at the time; and for a month the Government took no notice of it. However, the *Brisbane Courier* wrote a leading article on the "apparently unnecessary severity" of the inspector, and he was dismissed from the police instead of being hung. He is now an injured individual, and every one sympathises with him. If the blacks collect round a township to do any odd jobs of work, they are "dispersed," and no more questions are asked. I only heard the other day that the late Government used to give certain squatters "permission to disperse blacks," much

* An account of the atrocities committed by McNeill and Williams, of the Queensland labour ship *Hopeful*, is given by the writer in his "From my Verandah in New Guinea" in Chapter IX., pp. 202 to 209.—Ed.

the same sort of thing as giving a game licence at home. I could quote numberless instances of how squatters out Kangarooing have "flushed" a young gin and run her; of how native camps have been surrounded, the men all killed and the women tied to trees, and made target practice of at two hundred yards, because a few head of cattle had been speared. And in the face of all this, Queensland claims the right to appoint her own officers in New Guinea, and civilise the natives in her own way. The worst of it is that one can't get people at home to realise what is going on out here, and how, of all countries in the world, Queensland is the last to have any voice in the government of the five million inhabitants of New Guinea. They talk of an Australian Council for the good of New Guinea. At present it is only the "best interests of the natives" which have to be secured. Precisely the same thing was said at the annexation of New Zealand, and the Treaty of Waitangi was the charter of the natives by which all their lands were secured to them, and by which they were to be protected in every way. The result of that treaty has been two wars and the appropriation of nearly all their land, and the last of the Maories will figure shortly at the Aquarium, as the last of the Tasmanians did a few years ago. We are getting tremendously abused for shutting up the country, but till we get a good working establishment there it would be absurd to allow a rush of white men, and begin our

work with a lot of murders and other troubles on our hands.

* * * * *

After less than a month of recruiting his health at Cooktown, the Acting-Commissioner for New Guinea, as he now was, was back at his post at Port Moresby by the 8th of February, and stuck to it through the remainder of the rainy season. The natural result of this was a return of ill-health, this time so severe that, by the peremptory orders of the doctors of both of H.M.SS. *Swinger* and *Rapid*, he was obliged once more to return to Australia. Accordingly, on May 5th, he sailed from Port Moresby for Brisbane.

The next few letters relate to this period. Being mostly written to his mother, his state of ill-health is either not alluded to, or, when mentioned, is very much understated, in order, of course, to avoid causing alarm.

AROMA, NEW GUINEA,
February 13, 1885.

I write a line in great haste to say that I have nothing to say except that I am back again. Our crop of troubles have begun; the natives of this place, after a few weeks ago swearing eternal friendship to the Queen, have just murdered a white man

and his wife, his whole boat's crew, and have wrecked his ship; cut off their heads, distributed part of their bodies about, and now say they didn't do it. The chief of the tribe, who is a great friend of mine, invites me ashore, and is very pleasant. He evidently looks on our little man-of-war with contempt. However, we mean to do nothing till we know more. I leave the ship here, and return to Port Moresby in a boat while she goes to Townsville.

PORT MORESBY,
March 14, 1885.

The *Swinger* has just come in, and so there is a chance of writing. I have been leading an uneventful existence here for the last month, only diversified by a few short expeditions. Our rainy season is in full swing, so the country is nearly impassable. I do not expect Scratchley here till the end of April. By that time I shall have been five months in charge of the Protectorate. The charge does not involve much work at present, so I have occupied my time, as we can hardly ever get out, in writing a book on the Pacific south of the Equator. It is nearly finished now, and I had intended to work at it for the week the ship stays and send it home at once, but there are so many people about the place now that quiet work is impossible.

I have re-written my two articles on New Britain

and New Ireland for it. It is a rambling sort of effusion, and will in all probability not be accepted by any publisher; but still there it is, the best I can do, and if it is a failure I shall not break my heart. A preface to it, written by any literary man you may know, would prove an inducement to a publisher to take it.

I think it is a very good thing just at the present time that N.S. Wales has been allowed to send her little force to help in the Soudan. They are, I believe, by no means a representative force, as many of them are Englishmen. There is a feeling that Australia is allowed a place in foreign politics which gratifies her vanity.

We have a nice little crop of troubles on our hands in New Guinea. The natives attacked our men in the *Swinger* a month ago, and the captain had to retreat to his boat in a rather hasty manner. They set up the song they sing over the dead on seeing this, but a sixty-four pound shell interrupted them in the middle of it; M. unfortunately, being in doubt as to the legality of doing more damage to them, has left the matter still unsettled, and as the native positions are very strong, a big ship has now got to come and punish them.

Another tribe also required punishment, and so, as I always predicted, our work here begins by fighting. Port Moresby is in the hands of a tribe who have come from two hundred miles off to trade, as they call it; to loot, as I should say. They are

very strong, and no one on the coast dares to resist them. They walk about the village killing pigs, to the intense disgust of our Motu people, who wish most heartily they would go home. They take all the girls for whom they have a fancy, and the girls enjoy the fun of being fought for. They have brought a lot of women as decoys, who were carried off themselves in the same manner. I shall probably return with them to the westward where their home is, as they are pressing in their invitations, and would no doubt treat me well.

It is rather a sad fact that all the ships nearly have been recommissioned, and I have a new lot of naval officers to make the acquaintance of. The Admiral I have not seen, but he has very civilly sent me a present of sheep, which are a pleasant change from tinned stuff. I think from all accounts he will prove a great success in Australia.

If you ever see Lord W., you might say that I am trying to get a small collection made here of the sort of insects he likes. When I get a boxful I will send them home.

March 16, 1885.

Yesterday was my birthday, and we kept it on board the ship. This climate makes one feel very old. M. is urging me to let him punish the natives of Amazon Bay, and I suppose I must, though his

now that the Kapa-Kapas and Hulas are reconciled. I should think that the bush tribes are not to be trusted, as they were very sulky at not being allowed to fight. The Hulas in about a month's time will return to Kapa-Kapa to pay for the peace. They were the conquerors in the last battle, having killed one Kapa-Kapa and two bush natives, and having lost no men themselves. They therefore pay for two men, as they set off their man who was murdered by Kapa-Kapa and occasioned the war against one of the three whom they killed. It seems that the law on this subject is strict. Some years ago Motu made a descent on Boera and killed a great number of them. Boera came with arm shells and food to try for peace, but Boe's father said, "It is our place to make peace, we killed your men," and refused their gifts, though he acceded to their request, and conducted the negotiations in a proper manner.

COOKTOWN,
May 15, 1885.

After an interval of nearly two months I finish my letter to you. The Russian scare has prevented any ship from coming over to New Guinea, and now I am on my way to Melbourne, much against my wish. I have had a bad time for the last three months. I have escaped fever wonderfully, while every one else had it; but I have had, and am now suffering

from, a horrible native ulcer, which has kept me on my back for a long time. I was strongly urged by the doctor of the *Swinger*, two months ago, to go to Australia, but I did not consider myself justified in deserting my post, though there was nothing much to be done. However, the matter became too serious, and there was a prospect of the sinews of the foot and leg being destroyed, so I came over here the other day, and have been asked by Scratchley to go south to meet him. I am more annoyed than I can say at having to give in to it, but if I had stayed any longer in New Guinea, no doubt I should have lost the use of a foot. I hope to return in three weeks or a month. I only want a start towards recovery, and then I shall go back at once. Of course there is no danger of any sort, or I should not have told you this; but you must have known I was in Australia, so it is better to tell you myself. I like everything I have heard of Scratchley very much. He is most kind about my coming over here. Of course I held myself in readiness to return at once if he wished it, but I represented to him that it was certain that I must apply for sick leave for an indefinite period if I had to stay another two or three months in New Guinea.

May 21, 1885.

Am in Brisbane. I do not send my MSS. by this mail, but by next.

CHAPTER XIV.

RESTORING THE LABOURERS.

ROMILLY'S stay in Brisbane was but short, far too short, to be of any real use towards restoring his health. Important work, however, was offered him, and the opportunity for earning distinction was not one to be missed. The duty entrusted to him was that of personally superintending the restoration to their various homes of a large number of Papuan natives, who had been taken, from New Guinea and the adjacent islands, by labour ships to work in the Queensland plantations. A Royal Commission had been appointed by the Queensland Government to inquire into the circumstances under which these men had been engaged, and had reported that they had been illegally recruited. The result of the Report was that the Government ordered the natives to be returned immediately to their homes. In carrying out this order, Romilly had the valuable assistance of Mr. Chester, who co-operated in the expedition on behalf of the Queensland Government. The task, however, was by no means a simple one, for the difficulty must be considered of

first ascertaining not only to what particular island, but even to which particular tribe on any island, each individual native belonged, and then seeing that he was restored to his own belongings. The native's knowledge of geography was of course *nil*, so his assistance would be but of slight value, and woe betide the unfortunate wretch if he were put ashore among the wrong tribe, even though it might be on his own island. A short shrift and quick cooking and dishing-up would probably have been his fate, and the Queensland press, eager to find fault, would no doubt have made the most of the opportunity of showing up the atrocities of a Government official in return for the official interference with the labour trade. Ill-health was another serious obstacle in his way, though it is only slightly alluded to in his letters. I find, however, a note of his, made after his return, as follows: "Doctors warned me strongly against going, and told me I should probably lose my foot." All difficulties, however, were successfully overcome. The undertaking occupied the greater part of June and July, 1885, and was finally carried through without any casualty, and Hugh Romilly, on his return to Brisbane, was highly complimented on his success. The next four letters refer to this expedition.

QUEENSLAND CLUB, BRISBANE,
June 6, 1885.

Just a line to say I am going on all right, and, in fact, am going back at once to New Guinea for a six weeks' cruise in charge of about 500 kidnapped men. We have chartered a big steamer, and have a good doctor on board, so I shall be all right. It is a big job to carry through, but will be the death-blow to the labour trade, and I am glad of it. I have not met Scratchley yet, but our relations so far are most agreeable. This job I am doing now is worth a C.M.G. if I carry it through successfully. He says most distinctly that it is work for a *young* man, so the only objection to me would be removed. I have most flattering offers of employment from this Government, but of course I would not give up the Imperial service for a Colonial one; and I think I am now in the line to rise to a higher position than any colony could offer. I am glad to hear from you that my flag-hoisting was approved. I have heard nothing officially on the subject.

S.S. "VICTORIA," TOWNSVILLE,
June 12, 1885.

Just a line. We are *en route* for New Guinea, returning slaves. There is the most bitter feeling of hostility against us, and the men for the most part

have been put on board by the police. Some of the planters refused to give them up, or pay them for their year's enforced service. While I write, we have 300 on board, and have to get another 150. I consider discretion the better part of valour, and I do not land, as the population of this northern town would probably pelt me if I did. On the other hand, I allow no one on board the ship except officials.

It is very absurd, and the planters are doing more now to drag the name of the Colony through the dirt than ever they did before. The curious thing is that the planter class in Queensland are all English gentlemen, and by far the most civilised, so to speak, in the Colony. In their hearts they know the men have been kidnapped, but their hostility to the present Government prevents them from owning it. If I get this job through without accident, it will be the biggest I have ever done.

S.S. "VICTORIA," AT SEA,
July 13, 1885.

We have just finished our cruise returning kidnapped men to their homes, and a more interesting, and at times exciting, one I never had. But I cannot go into details, or give any thrilling experiences, and as we have three newspaper correspondents on board, I will send copies of their papers. The newspaper people have been

a great worry to me. You probably know how much I am beloved by the Queensland press, and their orders were, no doubt, to find fault. I expect to be held up to public execration, but you shall see for yourself.

Nearly every one * is on the verge of bankruptcy on account of the year's drought. One friend of mine has lost nearly 2,000,000 sheep and about 50,000 head of cattle in two years. It is calculated that a third of all the live stock in Australia have died in three years. On the other hand, some startling things have been going on in the mining world. The story of the Mount Morgan gold mine reads like a fairy tale. Mount Morgan is a hill, covered with a sort of loose pumice stone, and was part of a selection which was bought for about £150, having been generally considered utterly useless. The two brothers who bought now estimate its value at about 100 millions. The stone lies loose to a depth, in some places, of ten feet, and yields about forty ounces to the ton. The very dust of the road is swept up and washed, and gives large returns. A friend of mine, R., has 1000 acres adjoining Mount Morgan. I dined with him one night in Brisbane, and we talked about this complete revolution in gold mining, and he showed me a piece of stone which he had picked up on his land on account of its curious shape, and said it was exactly like Mount Morgan stone. I suggested crushing it the next day. In the morning,

* *I.e.* in Australia.

in the private rooms of the bank, we crushed and washed it, and found it full of gold. I never saw a man so taken aback in my life. No doubt it will make an immense fortune for him too, unless they find gold in such quantities that it will cease to be valuable. It is probably a greater discovery than the first discovery of gold at Bendigo and Ballarat.

QUEENSLAND CLUB HOTEL, BRISBANE,
July 25, 1885.

I don't know if our movements appear in the London papers, but here we are back after a most successful cruise. The papers here are all at me together, and there is a talk of a Commission to inquire into our proceedings. Of course they can't compel my attendance. They seem quite sorry we had no disasters. I am waiting here for Scratchley, and what my future movements are I do not know. I shall probably return with him to New Guinea. We have chartered the *Governor Blackall*, about 500 tons, and a good steamer. I hear she has been very nicely fitted up for us as regards offices and cabins. Scratchley—now Sir Peter—continues to be extremely civil.

The House here is sitting, and they seem to have nothing to talk about but our iniquities. Most of my friends are at present in opposition, and they do not allow the ties of friendship to prevent them from

embarked 238 men. They appeared to be in a better state of health than those we took at Mackay. One of them was suffering from fits.

June 13th.—In the morning we embarked the remainder of the men (132), the total number on board being 405. According to the lists in the Report of the Royal Commission we should have received 419. The Inspector of Polynesians did not account in a very satisfactory way for the remaining fourteen. Some he said were dead, and some missing, but no certificates of death were handed to us. Fifty of the Papuan recruits are still left on the Burdekin. The Inspector assures me that they are strongly opposed to going back, and they have therefore been allowed to remain. I have no means of ascertaining whether any special inducements have been offered them to do so. Some of the planters at the last moment refused to pay their men, and accordingly the Inspector of Polynesians was ordered to do so.

June 13th.—Left Townsville 6.30 P.M. All the return islanders, with three exceptions, are in good health, and all, with the exception of some of the men recruited by the *Hopeful*, in good spirits. It is a remarkable fact that these men sit alone in a state of sullen silence, while all the others laugh and joke among themselves. The more I think of it, the more I am convinced that great pressure must have been brought to bear upon the fifty men who have elected to remain upon the Burdekin. It is some-

thing quite outside of my experience that any body of men like that should unanimously prefer staying in a foreign land to going home. The love of home is so strong in them that *some very powerful arguments* must have been used to cause them to come to such a decision.

June 14th.—All well on board except one man, who is dying rapidly. The accommodation for the islanders is extremely good. The ventilation is perfect. A test of this is that in the morning there is no foul smell in the holds. The same number of Irish emigrants would probably be far more offensive. They get two good meals a day—biscuit and tea in the mornings, and as much sweet potato as they can eat. Twice a week they get salt beef, and tobacco is given them in small quantities as they require it.

June 16th.—The sick man, Wiritutu, from Nuakata on the north coast of New Guinea, died at 10.15 this morning. After the doctor had certified as to the cause of death, he was immediately buried. We had to stand off from the coast at night, as it was too late to enter the harbour when we sighted the land.

June 17th.—Anchored in Port Moresby at 2.45 P.M. I was much disappointed to hear that Mr. Chalmers, whose local knowledge would have been invaluable to us, was absent. He had gone westward to Motu-Motu, intending to walk back, and had left no directions for finding him. He intended to explore the ranges at the back of Hall Sound,

and to visit all the mountain villages. Under these circumstances it was useless to think of going west to look for him. I asked Mr. Lawes if he would accompany the expedition, and he said he would do so if I thought it necessary. He added at the same time that he would be absolutely useless, as he spoke none of the Eastern languages, nor did the natives there know him either personally or by reputation. Under these circumstances I asked him whether he would consider the Mission properly represented by my taking his Teste Island and Killerton teachers on board, and he said that that would satisfy him thoroughly. Mr. Lawes anticipated considerable difficulty in landing some of the men.

I engaged the services of the head boatman to the Mission, and those of two students of Mr. Lawes. I also engaged six Port Moresby natives as boat's crew. I am afraid we may be delayed a little in the landing operations by not having Mr. Chalmers on board.

June 18th.—Left Port Moresby at 9.45 A.M. for Teste Island. Jerry, the teacher at that place, will probably be of some use to us.

June 19th.—The Basilaki or Moresby Island men, the Kitui, Harris Island, and Milne Bay men, were mustered to-day. I asked the men if they would mind being landed all at one place, and whether there was any danger to themselves in such a proceeding. They at once agreed, and said that

they were all friendly there. I asked them to select the village which would suit them best, and they chose a place called Imoie. The Kitui men then asked also to be landed on Moresby Island, but at a different place—namely, Maseo. The Milne Bay men asked to be landed at Burra-Burra. This arrangement will save a great deal of time, and it evidently is what the natives wish for themselves.

June 20th.—Arrived at Teste Island, and sent a boat ashore at 8.45 A.M. It returned to the ship at 10.30, bringing Jerry the teacher and two of his boat's crew. The remainder of the men on board were mustered to-day, and all answered to their names, islands, and villages. I received information that a man named Reid had been murdered at the Engineer group.

Before landing any men, I thought it advisable to ascertain from Dr. Patrick Smith whether there were any of the contagious diseases on board which have proved so fatal in the New Hebrides and Solomon Islands. He assures me that he could find no trace of any. As far as we know, none of these diseases have been imported from Australia into New Guinea or its adjacent islands.

June 21st.—Left our anchorage at Hayter Island at 6.30, and anchored off Killerton at 9.30 A.M. At the request of the Burra-Burra and Vako-Vako men we landed the fifty men for those places at Killerton. They preferred all being landed together at this place, where they are only about a mile from home,

to being taken straight to their villages. They had many friends at Killerton, and though there were no very extravagant signs of joy at meeting them once more, there was a good deal of quiet nose-rubbing. Trade bundles for the relations of eight dead men were also landed, and I carefully explained to them the object of the Queensland Government in making this compensation.

The order of landing was as follows:—Two ship's boats with the fifty men in front, behind them the boat carrying the trade boxes and heavy gear, and abreast of it came a boat with the newspaper correspondents, and bringing up the rear was my boat, holding, besides myself, Mr. Chester and Mr. Stanley Harris the doctor, the whole five boats being towed by the steam-launch. Each boat was steered by one of the defence force men, and five of them accompanied me in my boat. On nearing the beach we cast off from the launch, and getting in front of the line landed first. The men of the defence force formed up on the beach, and all the men and baggage were safely landed. As I was unable to walk, I had had a chair prepared for me to be carried in. I had myself taken up a position under a large tree in the little village, and I then told De-on, the native teacher, to collect all the natives round about, and tell them to come into the village. When they were all assembled, I told them briefly, through De-on's interpretation, what had led to their being recruited, how it was suspected that

they did not understand the nature of their agreement, and how the Queensland Government had determined to send them home again. I told them further that no more ships would come to take any more men away, and that now they all belonged to Queen Victoria, who would always protect them when it was necessary, and that a big chief sent by the Queen would live in New Guinea and take care of them. A considerable amount of tobacco was distributed in presents, and we separated with the most friendly feelings on both sides.

We got back to the ship about 12.30, and immediately started for East Cape, to land sixteen men we had for that place. I did not go ashore a second time, on account of my leg. Mr. Chester, who took charge of the landing party, reported to me that on first landing at Motuna, the natives appeared very sulky. They would not shake hands as they usually do, and they had sent all their women and children into the bush. He sent for the women before he would allow the landing to go on, and they very soon made their appearance. He described to me how for some time no notice whatever was taken of the men who were landed, but that by degrees they began to shake hands and rub foreheads, and that eventually they cried with pleasure at seeing each other once more. They then led Mr. Chester and Mr. Harris round the village, and showed them all their little possessions, and finally wound up by offering them a present of four

pigs—a big present for them to make, but which was refused. There could be very little doubt of their pleasure at being at home once more.

We left East Cape about 4.30, intending to return to our Hayter Island anchorage, but as the night came on thick we were afraid to steam, and had to drift all night. Mr. Chester explained to them at Motuna why they had been sent home, very much in the same words as those I had used at Killerton.

June 22nd.—Anchored off the village of Masiu in Moresby Island (Basilaki) at noon. After mustering all the Basilaki and Kitui men, eighty-seven in number, I asked them for the last time if this was the place at which they would "*soonest*" land. They said, "Yes, they were all friends there, and they all wished to land together." The Kitui men, however, changed their minds at the last moment, and said they wished to be landed at Goalewa, near Kitui. I asked them if their trade goods would be stolen on shore, and the question was received with laughter, while they answered, "No, we are all very good friends." After passing all the Basilaki men into the boat, four Basilisk Island men came forward and asked to be landed there too. I asked them why they preferred being landed at Moresby Island to their own place on Basilisk Island, and they said they were all friends, and that they could go across to their own place when they felt inclined. They were evidently so anxious to land, and in such a state of dismay at the prospect of being left be-

hind, that I allowed them to have their own way. A canoe came off to the ship before we landed, and the men in her told us that the men on shore were frightened, and that all the women were being sent into the bush. I sent back a message to say that we were friends, and were going to land friends of theirs. In landing, the same order of boats was kept as at Killerton. I landed first with Mr. Chester and Mr. Harris, and the men of the defence force were drawn up as usual on the beach. I was glad to see plenty of women sitting in front of their houses, which showed that the message sent ashore was believed, and had had its effect. After all the men had landed, and the bundles for the relations of dead men, twenty-five in number, were stacked on the beach, I addressed the assembled crowd in much the same words that I had used at Killerton. At first it appeared as if the natives on shore and those we had landed had never seen each other before. Nothing could be more stolid and apathetic than their manner. I asked some of them why they did not greet their friends, but they only smiled and said, "By and by." One by one, however, they sneaked up to their friends and relations and began nose-rubbing, and after a short time it was going on in full swing. Both men and women were crying hard. When I explained to them the objects of the bundles for the dead men, the women began to howl, and I thought it nearly time to get into the boats, as the men sometimes get

very much excited when the women are crying over dead men. Nothing, however, could be more friendly than they were, and the men rushed to help to carry my chair to the boat. After we had embarked the lamentations became much more violent. They had, doubtless, gone through the whole of this ceremony before, as they had given all the men up for lost. To them it must have seemed a veritable resurrection from the dead. There was a great deal of genuine grief displayed when the dead men's relations came up to claim their bundles.

In the evening, the chief of Masiu came on board to pay us a visit. He received a number of presents and went ashore much pleased. We returned to the ship about 3 P.M., and the Kitui men were immediately mustered and sent ashore. Twenty were landed, and nothing worthy of mention occurred. There was only one dead man for Kitui to be accounted for. The time was so short to return to the ship before daylight closed, that the landing was necessarily rather hurried. All went off, however, quite satisfactorily, seventy-one men having been landed at the village of Maseo on Moresby Island, and twenty men at a point on Moresby Island close to Kitui.

June 23rd.—Left our anchorage at daylight, and arrived off Bentley (Arragusa) about 8.38 A.M. There were only seven men to land here, and two bundles for dead men. The natives received us

very cordially, and helped to run our boat upon the beach. The boat with the natives in it was so far behind mine that at first they did not recognise any of its occupants, and it was not till we were all seated under some trees that they did so. Then, in spite of themselves, they could not help some expressions of amazement, and the look on their faces was decidedly that of fear at seeing their supposed dead friends getting out of the boat. However, they maintained their usual stolid exterior after the first surprise was over. The relations of the dead men claimed their bundles, and one was opened to show the assembled crowds the contents. This caused more surprise, and the chief then stood up, and formally thanked me for bringing back the men, and making compensation for the dead. I made them my usual speech, and, as usual, told them that they were now under the immediate protection of Queen Victoria. The women before we left began their usual lamentation for the dead. They intended to make us large presents of cocoa-nuts, but we had no time to wait, as we had three more places to go to. From Bentley Island we went to Watu Island, where we had nine men to land, and presents for two dead men. There was nothing worthy of notice in this landing, nor in the next place, Koiaria, where we landed fourteen men and gave presents for three dead. I did not go ashore on these two occasions, as I wished to reserve myself for Tuppi-Tuppi, where we had eight men to land. Tuppi-Tuppi, or Slade Island, had been the

and said that they ought to thank them too. A large pig was brought in which I accepted. As we had to remain at this anchorage for the day, I gave permission for a shooting party to stay on shore. Nothing could be more friendly than the natives were, and there was no danger from them.

June 25th.—Left Nuakata at 6 A.M. and steamed for Normanby Island. About 9 A.M. we sighted a small steamer off the coast, which turned out on closer inspection to be the German vessel *Samoa*. As I wished to see Dr. Finsch we steamed up close to her and lowered a boat. When Dr. Finsch came on board, he told me what I already knew, that the supposed German settlement of East Cape consisted of only one German, H. by name, and a Scotch carpenter. The stories of driving back the natives were untrue, and only two cows had been landed. I gave Dr. Finsch a copy of the definition of the Anglo-German boundary line, and he promised to remove these two men as soon as possible. He told me that he had bought a small piece of land there, and should send in his claim to it later. He had just come from New Britain, and gave a satisfactory account of things there, and in New Ireland. We sent off letters and telegrams by him, as he was going straight to Cooktown. Though of course I did not ask him the question, he volunteered me the information that he was in no way connected with the German Government. This may be so, but it does not appear how he can afford to maintain

a steamer like the *Samoa* on the income allowed him by the Berlin Museum.

About noon we were opposite Bobuon on the east coast of Normanby Island, where there were two men to be landed. The surf was heavy on the beach, as we were on the weather side of the island. I did not land as the doctor wished me to have a quiet day, and a capsize in the surf might have stopped my landing at other places. I had so much confidence in Mr. Chester's coolness and experience, that it really mattered little whether he or I took charge of the landing party. The natives were friendly and quiet at Bobuon. The next village was Kassi-Kassi, about two miles east of Bobuon, where three men had to land, and a bundle for one dead man. Here a large crowd of natives was found, estimated at from three hundred to five hundred in number. They were much excited, and were all armed. The landing party had to wade some fifty paces on shore. It was found impossible to make these men sit down and be quiet. The party on the beach were mobbed, and the three men who were landed, were at once carried off by the women to be made a fuss over. Mr. Chester made them a speech, but he does not think that they took much notice of it. Though they were very noisy and much excited, they were still perfectly friendly. Jerry the interpreter explained the cause of the large crowd afterwards. He said that the inhabitants of several villages on the coast had collected at Kassi-Kassi to

build a very large war canoe, and that when it was finished, they meant to exterminate some of the smaller communities round about, and have a big feast. He said that this canoe was half finished, but that no one saw it but himself.

At the next village, Rikorea, there were no men to land, but two bundles for dead men were sent ashore. No stay was made at this place. The ship was lying nearly twelve miles off the beach.

June 26th.—Continued landing at Normanby Island. The natives were invariably shy at first, but were friendly afterwards, though always excited.

The villages on the coast of Normanby are miserable little places, but single houses may be seen dotted about the hills in the most inaccessible positions, from which one may infer that the natives live on very bad terms with their neighbours.

June 27th.—Landed men at six places. At Widi-Widi, the last place on Normanby Island, there was only one to land. The landing was bad, as a heavy surf was running; all the natives ran away from the beach, and the man we put on shore was left standing by himself in the middle of the village.

Having finished Normanby we went to Goulvain Island, and thence to a little island called Vekumara, which is not placed on the charts. The boats met with better reception there than at any other place.

June 28th.—Arrived off Wells Island (Senaroa)

about 8.30. As this was the place where two men had been shot by McNeil of the *Hopeful*, it was necessary to be cautious in landing. There was also a heavy surf plainly visible from the ship, although we were six or seven miles off. We landed in two boats, as I did not consider a press boat advisable under the circumstances. It was necessary to take precautions, though, as it turned out, they were not wanted. We found a good passage through the reef, and smooth water inside. The natives on the beach showed little fear, and to my surprise I saw plenty of women sitting down. Nothing could be more friendly than they were. Cocoa-nuts were offered to us immediately on landing. I gave them a short account of the trial of McNeil and Williams, and of the punishment they had received, and made my usual speech as well. The boys we had landed cried a good deal on our departure. We ascertained also that the two men shot by the *Hopeful* people had died. We saw the widows and the graves in the village, and even the bones of one of the men were shown to us. We gave large presents here, and I hope made them believe that all white men are not of the same stamp as the *Hopeful* murderers.

June 29th.—We left Wells Island for little Woodlark, about ninety miles distant. Early in the morning we were close up to it. I did not go ashore here, and as I remembered that in 1881 the Woodlark people were particularly civil, I gave no special instructions as to precautions. Mr. Chester's

report when he returned on board showed how careful one should always be in spite of one's own opinion. He reported that the men on shore were a surly, treacherous lot, all armed with tomahawks and cane knives. They were somewhat foolishly allowed to get between the oars of the boat, and having done so attempted to haul her up on the beach. Charlie, the boat-steerer, said that he saw an ambuscade of natives in the bush, and Mr. Laurie saw them secreting spears ready for use in the fringing scrub. Under these circumstances no landing was attempted, and the return islanders waded ashore with their bundles. The natives' hands had to be removed by force from the gunwale of the boat. Mr. Chester behaved very wisely in allowing no landing. From whatever cause it may be, the natives of these groups have changed very much during the last four years. The natives of Woodlark especially used to be most friendly people, but only the other day they spat and threw stones at Captain Bridge of the *Espiègle* while he was hoisting the Union Jack there.

June 30th.—Landed men at three islands, Jouveney (Twai), Jurien (Kitawa), and Evans Island (Tanaba), seven men in all. No one went ashore at any of these places, but the boats were backed into the beach and the men landed. The natives were quite friendly at the first two places; at the third we saw none, but heard them shouting in the bush. It was dark when we put the one man for Evans

Island ashore, but he preferred landing to staying on board the ship for another night.

July 1st.—Returned to Ferguson Island, a distance of ninety miles. Hilliwood, where we had eight men to land, was the scene of the shooting, drowning, and throat-cutting of the *Hopeful* murderers. We landed a strong party, and, as usual, the defence force men were drawn up on the beach. The natives were extremely shy, and, at one time, seemed doubtful whether we meant to fight or not. I saw an old man distributing bundles of spears, which were hidden in convenient places in the bush. However, the return men reassured them, and when a considerable crowd had assembled, I addressed them through double interpretation. I told them of the punishment which had been inflicted on the *Hopeful* men, and that for the future they would be protected against such outrages, and that we were going to give them some compensation for the men who had been killed. The four bundles we had set aside for compensation were then given to the relations of the dead men, and they were evidently much pleased. A large pig and many bundles of spears were laid at my feet, and after staying about an hour on shore we returned to the vessel. On leaving, we gave them three cheers, to which they responded by a shout of "kaiwu" (good-bye). It is a noticeable fact that the two places where the *Hopeful* men committed murders, are those where we met with the best receptions. In both cases the

return islanders proved most useful to us, and were genuinely sorry when we left. To the very last some of the men would not lay aside their distrust, and refused to mix with us, but that cannot be considered unnatural in a place where they had been so badly treated.

July 2nd.—Under way all day, and landed no men.

July 3rd.—Landed four men at Deboyne Island.* I was anxious, if possible, to land them without having any communication with their friends on shore. The Deboyne people are suspected of several murders, and till they had been called to account for them I wished to have no intercourse friendly or otherwise with them. The men were therefore landed at a spot from which they would have to walk a long way to their village. As there is but one village on the island, they were in no danger of meeting unfriendly natives. Moreover, they were quite satisfied to land there.

After Deboyne we landed men at St. Aignan. There was no landing at this place as the natives looked wild. After finishing St. Aignan, we went to Kamuta in the Renard Group. Here the natives were wonderfully friendly, and, strange to say, spoke some English. They alluded frequently to a man named Tommy, and seemed much surprised that we did not know him. In spite of their friendliness, no women made their appearance. They told

* In the Louisiade Archipelago.—Ed.

us that the St. Aignan natives frequently came over to fight them. To the left of the village was a curious fortified rock, some seventy feet high. I made my usual speech, and, as food of every description was nearly exhausted on board the ship, I allowed trading for fish and yams to go on.

July 4th.—Entered the Barrier Reef through Bramble Pass, at 9.30 A.M., and anchored off Pig Island (Nimoa) at 10 A.M. Landed two Piron men at Pig Island. They had been on a visit to Piron when recruited, but Pig Island was their home. Landed men at Joannet (Godon), a very shallow and rocky landing, the boats not being able to get within one hundred yards of the beach. The men had therefore to wade ashore. We saw a ketch at anchor, but did not communicate.

July 5th.—Landed seven men at Brierly Island, six men at Grass Island (Ganim), and thirteen men at Godon (Joannet I.). The landings were bad, and the natives very shy. No natives were seen anywhere, and they appeared to think that their friends were white men, probably on account of their clothes.

July 6th.—Went to the S.E. end of Sudest Island (Quanatai), and landed men at Reua. No one at first was visible on the beach. In the afternoon their confidence was a little restored, for a canoe came off to the ship. As we could not work back on account of the sun in the afternoon being in our

eyes,* Mr. Chester, Mr. Harris, and I, went about two miles up an unnamed river running into the bay where we were anchored. It appeared to be navigable for a considerable distance. We saw no natives, but there were some canoes and houses on the banks.

July 7th.—Landed men at Panatona, Motupuia, and Mandona, all on Sudest. The natives kept themselves carefully out of sight, and would have nothing to do with the boats. This was a very long and fatiguing day in the boats.

July 8th.—Finished Sudest Island by landing men at Patibo and Hupoani. As usual, no one made his appearance. Formerly the Sudest natives were by no means very shy; a complete change seems to have come over them now.

July 9th.—Landed men at Moturina, a small island near Brooker. The natives were friendly, and gave us a pig.

July 10th.—Arrived at Teste Island in the morning, and landed one boy there—the last in the ship. We also put Jerry and Cago ashore at this place. Both of them were very useful to us. Cago, I think, may be in some danger of his life at Killerton where he lives, but he does not think so. He has taken enough trade goods back with him to patch up half-a-dozen quarrels.

* And the consequent danger from not being able to see the numerous reefs.—ED.

July 12*th.*—Arrived at Port Moresby, and anchored at 8.45 A.M.

July 13*th.*—Sailed from Port Moresby for Brisbane at 6 A.M.

CHAPTER XV.

CRUISING WITH SIR PETER SCRATCHLEY.

In the middle of August 1885 Sir Peter Scratchley, who had been up to that time in Australia conferring with the Ministers of the various Australasian colonies as to the expenses of the administration of New Guinea, started to inspect and administer his new Protectorate. The Australasian Steam Navigation Company's ss. *Governor Blackall* had been chartered by him for the New Guinea service, and Romilly joined his chief on board her at Brisbane. After calling at Townsville and Cooktown, they arrived at Port Moresby on the 22nd of August. The following is the record of Sir Peter Scratchley's proceedings in New Guinea, as given by his private secretary, Mr. G. Seymour Fort, in his official report. I quote the passage almost in full, as it is also a record of Romilly's movements during the two first of the three periods referred to, and throws some light on his next letters home:—

XV.

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From a photograph TUPUSELEI FROM THE SHORE *To face p. 249*

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS.

"After arrival of Sir Peter Scratchley in New Guinea, his time may be divided into three periods:

"(1) From 28th August to 12th October, during which period he was engaged in establishing the seat of government at Port Moresby and in inspecting the country from South Cape to Dinner Island. Redscar Bay was visited, and an expedition made inland for about twelve miles to the Kabadi district. The following places along the coast were also visited:—Bootless Inlet, Tupuselei, Kailee, Kapakapa, Hula, Kemp, Walsh River, Kerupunu, Kalo, Aroma, South Cape, Teste Island, and Dinner Island. From each of these places expeditions were made inland, in some cases penetrating to the interior to a distance of fourteen miles.

"(2) Period from 12th to 30th October. During this period Sir Peter Scratchley, in company with H.M. ss. *Diamond* and *Raven*, who were awaiting his arrival at Dinner Island, was engaged in investigations concerning the killing of white men which had occurred among the islands on the south and south-east coast, in the Louisiade Archipelago, &c. For the purpose of obtaining evidence the following islands were visited:—Killerton Island and the mainland in Milne Bay, Dufaure Island, Lydia and Toulon Islands. On the 29th the vessels returned to Aroma, where the flag was hoisted in the

presence of about 2000 natives, and on the 31st they returned to Port Moresby.

"(3) From 1st November to 1st December—a period of exploration and discovery. On the 1st November the *Governor Blackall* was sent back to Australia in consequence of the dangerous illness of Mr. Askwith, serving on staff, and Sir Peter Scratchley remained on shore at Port Moresby for twelve days, making an expedition fifty miles inland to Mr. Forbes's station at the base of Mount Owen Stanley."

The report then proceeds to describe Sir Peter's voyage of exploration on board the *Governor Blackall* after her return to Port Moresby, which, however, need not be quoted here, as Romilly was in Australia during most of this third period. The reason for this was the old story of ill-health, due to the climate. The following note, which I take from a short memorandum of events made by himself two years afterwards, shows that they were no insufficient reasons which compelled him to lie up during that which was probably the most interesting period of the cruise of the *Blackall*. These are his words: "Though very ill, against doctor's advice I joined the *Blackall*. During the whole cruise of the *Blackall* I was ill—at first with my leg, which compelled me always to lie down, and subsequently with a very violent attack of fever, from which I barely recovered. After being invalided, much

against my will, by a board of doctors of three ships of war, I contracted, while going south down the Australian coast, an acute attack of internal inflammation, the result of fever. When nearly recovered, after a month or so of Australia, I received intelligence of Sir P. Scratchley's death on December 2nd, 1885."

This last unhappy event occurred immediately upon the arrival of the *Governor Blackall* at Cooktown, whither she had steamed direct in consequence of Sir Peter's serious illness. Romilly must have rejoined the *Blackall* immediately on receipt of the news, and he then took charge of the body of his late chief as far as Melbourne, where the funeral took place. By the terms of the Commission he was now the Acting Special Commissioner for New Guinea, and he accordingly administered the affairs of the Protectorate until the 27th of February, 1886, when the new Commission, appointing the Hon. John Douglas to succeed Sir Peter Scratchley, arrived. Romilly had previously to this applied by cable for sick leave, which was granted, and he accordingly sailed for England in the beginning of March. Before leaving he obtained a Commission under the Queensland Government to represent them, so far as New Guinea exhibits were concerned, at the Colonial Exhibition of London of 1887, and the New Guinea annexe to the Queensland court was one of the most interesting features of the exhibition.

S.S. "GOVERNOR BLACKALL,"
August 22, 1885.

Here is a last line for you before finally saying good-bye to Australia. Our party on board is Scratchley, Fort his P. S., Glanville, doctor, artist, and correspondent of *Graphic*, a naturalist, a botanist, a photographer, and myself. We are also taking Forbes,* but not his party. At present I think we shall all get on well. So much for the party. Nothing could be nicer than the ship is; I have an enormous cabin, bigger indeed than Scratchley's, fitted up in the most approved yacht fashion. My office and bath-room open out of it. He seems to look after every one's comfort, and evidently knows how to make life comfortable. It is a great change from the old days. Forbes has lost all his things by the sinking of a lighter, but he tells me he has a French book for me, a present from you, which was fished up from the bottom of the sea among the few things he recovered. I daresay he may succeed to a certain extent, and we are going to help him as much as we can. All people whose opinion I care for have expressed themselves much

* Mr. H. O. Forbes, F.R.G.S., who was going on an expedition to explore the Owen Stanley range with the object of making a geological report to the Government, and collecting specimens in natural history. He took a party of two Europeans and twenty-five Malays with him, and established a station at the foot of the range, which was visited by Sir P. Scratchley. *Vide* Mr. Fort's report.—ED.

pleased at the way our *Victoria* expedition was conducted. I send you some papers. You will see how much I am beloved by the Queensland folks. I shall have means of writing to you again shortly from Port Moresby, and telling you how we get on. This is a tour of inspection and likely to last four months.

"BLACKALL," PORT MORESBY,
August 30, 1885.

I have now been ten days on board and I like our chief immensely. He is just the right sort of man to serve—very strict in business, but very pleasant in private. He has a great idea of making himself and every one with him comfortable, and indeed the arrangements made for me on board were far in excess of anything I expected. He has written a most complimentary despatch about our *Victoria* expedition, and has told me it could not have been better done. He is a wonderfully good administrator, and if I ever step into his shoes it will be a good thing to have had the path made smooth before me. We are now going round the whole protected coast, and there are many places I have not yet seen which I shall be glad to go to. We shall take four months over the cruise, but we have made arrangements for mails, so you will hear from time to time.

whom we returned have sworn to kill all the interpreters employed by labour ships, and from the recent murder of Fryer by some of these identical boys, it would appear that they include white men as well.

At Port Moresby, I found a fair collection of orchids waiting for me, but the collection of birds had almost broken down. G. B. has been ill for two months and unable to work, and it appears not unlikely that he will not be able to work any more. In two months he has only got twenty-five birds, whereas in the first month he got nearly five hundred. However, the orchids are good of their sort and there appear to be some new ones among them. M. appears to be making a fair collection of fish and other things for the intercolonial exhibition. The fish, however, are said not to vary much from those of the Australian coast.

August 31st.—This morning, Mr. Lindt, our photographer, started off for the Rona Falls. Mr. Forbes goes up to Sogeri to-morrow with Charles as guide and interpreter. He proposes to form a camp and depôt for stores there. His men will not arrive till the 11th of September, so he has a good opportunity now of seeing his future field of action. They will probably be away ten days, and I shall make arrangements for having plants sent down, as this is the best time of the year for picking them.

At twelve o'clock to-day Boe-Vagi came off to pay an official visit to the General. He had on his old

commodore's uniform, and looked very grand, but an irrepressible titter went round the ship when he came on deck. He was very grave and dignified, however, and showed no signs of laughter himself.

September 1st.—The natives here are very active just now in preparing for their trading voyage to the west. The women for six months past have been making pots, but now they are working double tides, and it is a difficult matter to pick one's way along the beach through the numerous little fires where pots are baking. The "lakatois," or trading canoes, are nearly ready, and should be quite ready to start in a fortnight's time. The natives of this coast are the only people in the Pacific who organise trading expeditions to considerable distances. The departure of the fleet is the great event of the year. All sorts of spirits and devils are propitiated, and many other ceremonies are gone through which, in spite of missionary teaching, they appear to believe in as firmly to-day as they did ten years ago. Port Moresby itself is very badly off for food, while Motu-Motu, the principal village they trade with, is abundantly supplied with sago. Each man takes about 50 pots as his share, and as this year 20 canoes, carrying in all 600 men, are going, no less than thirty thousand pots will go to the west. The men will stay away between three and four months, and should bring back about one hundred and fifty tons of sago. Though this sounds a large quantity, it lasts but a very short time, for the whole population

get through it as fast as possible, and make no provision for the six months of the year during which they have to go without it. Each lakatoi consists of five or six of the largest canoes lashed firmly together, and decked over. Two deck houses are then built for sleeping in and keeping their weapons in, and the whole vessel is surrounded by a strong and serviceable gunwale. The anchors are merely huge blocks of coral, to which are attached vines the thickness of a man's wrist and about fifty fathoms in length. They aim at starting with the end of the S.E. monsoon, so as to get a fair wind, and returning with the commencement of the N.W.

At the beginning of the year, when the Motu-Motu fleet came to Port Moresby, they were caught in a gale of wind and only a few of the canoes managed to get in. The others were drifted past the harbour, four of them were sunk, and some of the others drifted ashore in the hostile territory of Aroma, where they were attacked by the natives. They were saved however by a young teacher who told the Aroma natives that they would have to kill him first. He then brought them safely to Port Moresby. The rage of the rest of the traders was great when they heard of the loss of so many valuable cargoes and lives, and they were with difficulty restrained from venting their anger on the Port Moresby men who had had nothing to do with the catastrophe.

At 11 A.M. to-day Boe-Vagi and a number of the

petty chiefs came off to the ship to see the General and to hear a speech read informing them of the Queen's protection.

The General's speech was as follows: "I am glad on my arrival to make the acquaintance of the principal head-men of Port Moresby, and to receive from Mr. Lawes a favourable report of the general good behaviour of the people. Your country is now under the protection of the great Queen Victoria, and I trust that under God's blessing this will conduce to your happiness and well-being. Boe-Vagi has been recognised as your chief. I expect you to show him the respect due to his position. If you have any complaints to make they are to be addressed to Boe-Vagi, who will report them to my officer, Mr. Musgrave, and they will be inquired into." This speech was translated by Mr. Lawes and received with murmurs of approval. After they had made a few remarks, two handkerchiefs, a tomahawk, and some sticks of tobacco were given to each man, and they departed apparently well pleased.

September 5th.—Got up at 4.30 to make an early start to Bootless Inlet. It is supposed that there may be a harbour there after all, but both Chalmers and I know that there is not, as we have passed it so often going to the eastward. Pullen, of the *Lark*, came with us; viz., the General, myself, Askwith, Fort, and Chalmers. It very soon became apparent that the steam launch could hardly do anything even in the slight sea we had, and towing

the boat almost stopped her entirely. It was therefore a very wet, slow, and uncomfortable journey. We took about four and a half hours doing the twelve miles. Immediately on our arrival we decided to return. There was no deep water channel visible into the sound, and it appeared to be shallow coral water all over. We landed on Lion Couchant Island for breakfast, which we were much in need of, and, after that, returned at once, inspecting Locol Island on the way.

September 8th.—Nothing has happened, life is very dull at Port Moresby. The *Lark* has sailed, and will not be back till the 12th, while we started for Redscar Bay this morning for two or three days. There we shall probably go up some of the rivers, and see the Kabadi Land, about which there has been so much discussion. All the white men in the place have been notified that the coast from Kerepunu to South Cape is unsafe, also Moresby Island and the d'Entre-casteaux group, the N.E. coast, the Woodlark group, Jurien and Jouveney, and the Engineer group. Pretty sweeping this, but if any one gets killed now in any of these places he will have to avenge himself, as we shall not do it. In fact we don't mean to avenge any one. There is no doubt that few, if any, murders take place without very good cause, or, at any rate, what seems such to a native.

September 10th.—To-day we have just come back from the south mouth of the Arou River. Two

days ago Askwith and I got a small boat from the ship and started off to inspect the bar at the mouth, but before we quite knew what we were about, we got into the breakers at the bar and had to go on. As it was dead low water springs, a capsize seemed a certainty, but a wave which only half broke into the boat carried us safely over the bar and stranded us in six inches of water. As we had a rising tide we got into the river in half an hour or so, little supposing that we could not get out again. But, after an hour or two spent in looking for ducks which did not exist, we suddenly realised the fact that the wind had freshened very much from the S.E. On returning to the mouth we found a line of heavy breakers on the bar half a mile across, and, as we had broken the pintle of the rudder, and had no means of mending it, we decided not to risk the bar for that night. I decided to return up the river six miles where I knew there was a large village, and camp there for the night. We got there about 8 P.M., and, on asking for food, were told that we could have yams, but nothing else. We managed to get a chicken, however, and did pretty well. I knew that they would be anxious on board the ship, and they all came ashore next day, but they chose their time better than we did, and came in on the top of high water. They were very glad to find us at the village, as they thought that we might have been swamped trying the bar.

That day the General and all the rest of the party went over the much disputed Kabadi Land.

We formed a large camp at the mouth of the river, and I returned to it about midday, leaving the others to find their way on foot. In the evening, after a very good dinner, we gave up the tent to the General, and Askwith and the rest of us slept in hammocks. Our camp was much disturbed by wild pigs. The night was hot, and no one slept much. In the morning a lot of teachers and natives came down to pay us a visit before we started. They were well received and photographed by Mr. Lindt.

September 11th.—Got back to the ship about 10 A.M. after crossing the bar very easily. The teachers and their families who had come down to the camp to be photographed, seem to attach a mystic importance to the performance. About 2 P.M. we made sail for Bari-Vara, where I had recollections of some excellent pigeon shooting in the N.W. season, when I was in the *Swinger*. On that occasion we killed eighty in three-quarters of an hour. After a stiff pull and having to walk the boat over three or four hundred yards of reef, we got to the small rocks which the pigeons frequent. They are very steep, so much so as to be nearly inaccessible, but by dint of perseverance, Askwith, Fort, and two blue jackets got to the top, while I remained in the boat as I was unable to walk. The first shot startled several hundreds of pigeons, and then some very pretty

shooting began. My gun, which was a plain cylinder, was not strong enough to reach the greater number of the birds as they fly very high, but before dark I had shot a dozen, which we picked up, and a good many which we could not get. The other two guns did not get very many, as they were really too close to their birds, and so suddenly did the flocks come upon them that they had not time to shoot. However, we had a very good day, and the men with us were tremendously keen, and swam out to pick up the birds.

The Island of Bari-Vara is a celebrated haunt for turtle. The natives make constant excursions there to turn them, but a white man requires experience of their habits and keen eyesight to distinguish their tracks in the soft sand to be successful. A seining party was organised to fish there, but the fish seemed to be very small and few. There are but few places on the coast where this sort of fishing is of much good.

We passed the *Lark* in Idler's Bay this morning. A combined expedition of *Larks* and *Blackalls* is being organised to go to the Rona Falls. Forbes will probably be back, and we are all anxious to hear how he has got on.

September 12th.—We were anxiously waiting for the *Herbert* all day yesterday, but she did not come. It was blowing so hard that the steam launch sank as she was lying astern of the ship. Luckily her painter held fast, and there she was suspended in

about three fathoms. After a lot of trouble she was floated again. Forbes and Charles have come back from Sogeri. Forbes seems pleased with the place, and noted a spur of the range which seems as if it might lead to the Owen Stanley by a not very precipitous route. They have selected a site for a house at an elevation of 1600 feet, but at a point where a day's march will take them to 6000 feet. Forbes has come to the conclusion that he has been ill-advised in bringing a number of Malays with him. He is therefore going to give them up in four months' time, as he has the right to send them home after six months' service. He would probably have trouble between them and the native women, and even if they had not got to fight, he would have to pay very heavily for their intrigues. I think myself that he will do better with the natives of the country. He is in no hurry, which is a good thing. He is prepared to send for his wife, and to stay for years if necessary until the work is finished. Altogether I think that he has the brightest prospects of any explorer hitherto.*

* Here the journal ends abruptly.—Ed.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

"BLACKALL," PORT MORESBY,
September 5, 1885.

If I came home I should be made one of the Commissioners for the Intercolonial Exhibition. We are combining with Queensland and New South Wales in that enterprise. We shall have a nice little collection, but hardly a big enough one to show by ourselves. . . . The natives are murdering away merrily, but in the present absurd state of things we have no jurisdiction either to issue regulations or to punish. At present we are being successfully defied both by natives and whites. They have promised us a yacht at home, and are going to keep her up for us; but the Colonies refuse to increase their contribution, as they would have done had we taken the whole country instead of letting Germany have half. We are struggling along now and no more. By-the-way, I never told you that a catastrophe happened to the collection of what are generally called "bugs," which I made for Lord W. They were all spoilt by water, and so were not sent home. I will get some more if I can. He sent me a pamphlet entitled, "Melanic variations of Exotic Lepidoptera in High Altitudes," which I did not read as the name frightened me!

Forbes has handed over to me the book you

sent me. Considering the perishable nature of French books, it has stood the bottom of the sea pretty well.

AROMA, NEW GUINEA,
September 30, 1885.

We are, as you see by my address, slowly coasting to the eastward. At this moment an old ruffian has just sat down by me, hung all over with opposum's gall bags, and I can hardly breathe; I daresay you will smell it on this paper. I have just had a sharp attack of fever, but have, as I always do, got over it very quickly, and now feel none the worse. Four of us got it together. We went off shooting one afternoon in a river, but we found in the evening we could not get out of it as the sea had risen on the bar and we had broken our rudder. We therefore camped there, wet, cold, and hungry; result, fever all round. One of the four is still very bad, and I do not know that he will get over it. The cruise began well, but by this thinning of our ranks it is not very cheerful at present. We are now on our way to meet four men-of-war at the East Cape, to deliberate with them on the steps to be taken to clear out the various nests of pirates in the islands there. My belief is we shall do nothing. I am much opposed to it myself, as they can be suppressed without fighting.

I think I told you that my chief and I get on most capitally; nothing could be nicer than he is. He has expressed constant wonder to me since he has seen something of the country, that I was able to get through half the work I did in the old days.

For a year I had been preparing careful New Guinea notes for a book on that country, but the wind has been taken out of my sails as we are preparing a book at public cost, containing all that is at present known of it, and I have of course had to give all my information to this semi-official work. There would be no sort of use in my attempting to write in opposition to it. It is to be beautifully and profusely illustrated, and will no doubt be a capital book.

Here is a little story for you which amused me. Some of our men fell temporarily much in love with some of the girls of this place, and were encouraged by those young ladies on account of their tobacco and knives. At last they said they would leave the ship when every one was asleep and meet them by appointment. "Very good," said the girls, "but mind you bring plenty of tobacco and knives, or we shall not be glad to see you." At night about eleven o'clock the men dropped into a canoe and paddled ashore, and saw the number of girls they expected waiting for them. In a very short time they had been coaxed out of all their tobacco and knives, but no sooner was this done than they must have been astonished to see

their intended sweethearts give a wild yell, tear off their petticoats, and rush off into the bush. Then it dawned upon them that they were not girls at all, but boys who had borrowed their sisters' clothes to keep the appointment for them.

S.S. "BLACKALL," EAST CAPE, NEW GUINEA,
October 19, 1885.

. . . . We have got as far as East Cape on our tour of inspection, and now we have got to go all the way back to Port Moresby for coals and provisions. We have been burning towns and smashing canoes, and other police work. We all hate it, and feel very mean while we are doing it. The natives have sworn to kill every white man, and they have killed a good many. They say they were stolen by Queensland ships, and half their men died in Queensland, and they must have revenge. I have had bad fever, which I could not shake off till it turned into a low fever. However, I have shaken it off now and have refused to be invalided. There is no doubt I must have at least six months' leave soon, but I don't want to take it till our charter of this ship is up, and that is not till February. My foot is all right at last, and I hope shortly to get a boot on. I am better off than one of our party who got fever at the same time as I did, and though he has shaken off the fever he gets weaker every day. I am afraid he won't pull

through it. Nothing seems to hurt me, but I can't afford to go on constantly getting fever, as it must kill in the long run, and I had more difficulty in getting rid of the last attack than I ever had before. It is very easy for a board of doctors to say, "You must invalide," but they don't consider all the difficulties in the way of doing it. If I invalide there is no one to do my work, and it seems to me I am bound to stick to it as long as I can. The General is intensely civil to me. He has begun to take an interest in the work, and I don't think we could have a better man for the place. We mean to cruise up the N.E. coast as far as the boundary, and if we have time we may have a look at the German country. I don't know what we can do up that coast, as we have no interpreters for it and the natives are sure to be frightened of us, but I suppose we must be able to say we have visited it. I am sorry to say the men I landed in the *Victoria* are the most busy at murdering: one of them came on board the other day and coolly confessed to having killed a white man, saying at the same time he had brought payment for him, viz., four arm shells and a pig's tooth. Such is the value of a man's life here. The poor wretch was much astonished when he was put in irons, he could not understand it at all. It will take years before we have friendly intercourse with the natives of all these groups of islands. At present they hate us, and I think with justice.

UNION CLUB, BRISBANE,
November 12, 1885.

I am taking a short spell here to shake off fever which I have had badly. I am right enough now, however, and am going up to a friend's place on the Darling Downs, which are a long way from the sea, and very cool. I go back in three weeks to New Guinea to relieve Scratchley, but it will be only for a short time, a month or so. We hear a report here that all the members of the Geographical Expedition have been murdered. I have offered to go up the Fly to get news of them, and relieve them if they require it, but there is a hitch about steamers and money. It is rather a pity that Scratchley should have had to begin his reign by burning towns and smashing canoes, but the natives deserved it. Almost all the murders have been committed by natives returned from Queensland. I had intended to send you a magazine article home about our cruise, but I have been too seedy to attend to it, and I am going to do no work in Australia.

The Germans are in trouble already in New Guinea, and we have had to help them. I think they will abandon their new possession soon.

Every one is cheering up here, as the drought seems to be breaking up. It comes too late to save many formerly rich men, and it has killed many million of sheep and cattle. In some parts they

have had no rain for three years. It is dismal work staying at a station where the sheep die in hundreds daily.

TALARA, TOOWOORUBA,
November 24, 1885.

I write to you under difficulties, as I was capsized out of a buggy this morning and have sprained my wrist slightly. I have been to several charming little Australian homes lately, in search of health in this wonderful climate. I cannot imagine there can be a better sanatorium in the world than the Darling Downs. The people are so glad to see one, in spite of the terrible season, and though most cannot afford mutton (fresh), poultry, eggs, milk, etc., are delicious.

It has been my good fortune to see the break of the drought while staying in the bush. Instead now of the "boss" coming in to breakfast and saying he had been shooting calves because their mothers had no milk, he says all the dams are full, the creeks and waterholes "bank and bank," and a general air of cheerfulness prevails, which is in strong contrast to the depression of a few weeks ago.

The cattle cannot be driven even three miles a day, their feet crack off and leave them helpless. There is not a squatter in Queensland who is not in the hands of the banks. This is a charming place, but

I don't suppose there are a hundred head of cattle left on the 20,000 acres of it.

About myself I have nothing but good news to give. My foot is well and strong enough for a good walk, but, oddly enough, it does not like riding. My Brisbane doctor tells me he has never seen such a recovery, and he made sure that even if the foot were not amputated, some of the bone would have to come out. I don't think under any circumstances I would have had it done. My fever is quite well, and also the internal inflammation which was a result of it, and I never felt or looked better in my life than I am now. The doctors say my fever was some form of typhoid. They know best, but I think it was malarial. I go back in ten days for a month's cruise, and I am happy to say A. comes with me. If I go through this cruise all right, I shall fulfil my original programme of visiting the western rivers, Fly, Aird, and Baxter. It will be most interesting. I have gained credit for my *Victoria* expedition—in fact Scratchley, in reporting it, used more flattering expressions than I deserve.

I was very nearly starting off in charge of a rescue party to the Australian Geographical Society Expedition upon the Fly a week ago, but at the last moment I refused, for reasons which would take too long to tell. One was that I believed, and always said, the expedition was all right, and I am justified in my opinion by their all turning up safe and sound at Cooktown a few days ago.

Since I began this letter my plans are again changed. I mean to take the Aird and Baxter rivers at once, and leave the R. C. Mission to look out for themselves for the present. I am afraid this change of plans may prevent A. coming with me, as I may be away three months. I am chartering a river steamer for the purpose, and look forward to the trip. You must not be in the least anxious about me, as I am well in health, and, as to looking after my skin, I feel any amount of confidence in myself. I leave Cooktown probably December 20th. When I come back I shall receive your letters about the possibility of taking English leave.

The leave is granted me, and I shall take six months in Australia if I cannot go home. I think, though I am well enough now, that I do require it. I have never had the time to visit the far western district, and that would be my object. I should not mind either, if I can find a "mate," changing my name and doing a little digging. This probably sounds horrible to you, but if it was not for the Colonial Office there would be no necessity even to change one's name. I like digging, and would be glad to see a gold rush to New Guinea, though it is almost treason to say so. I am most anxious to make another Pacific cruise, as at present I do not wish it to be understood that I belong entirely to New Guinea. I have rambled on in this letter to a great length, and I will finish now. A Select Committee here have just decided that our action

in returning the islanders was illegal. They wish us now to compensate all the planters, but they can't get blood out of a stone.

"BLACKALL," AT SEA,
December 8, 1885.

Of course you have heard some days ago of Gov. Scratchley's death. By the time you get this the new appointment will no doubt have been made, and in the meantime I take it. Of course I consider I have a better claim than any one for it, but I suppose I sha'n't get it. It is not pleasant being on board this ship now, but I shall pay her off at once after the funeral. I am so busy now that I can hardly spare a minute to write, and my wrist is so stiff after its sprain that I can hardly write at all. I do not see much chance of returning to New Guinea at present. As all the Australian world will be in Hobart, I shall probably go there. This will of course spoil my long leave, but it can't be helped.

BALARK,
December 20, 1885.

I believe a fit of what you call my Australian idleness has come over me lately, as I have let several mails pass without writing. I am staying

for a couple of days with D. W. here before going back to Sydney. We have just finished burying poor Scratchley. They gave him a most imposing public funeral in Melbourne. The telegrams have already told me that I have no chance of succeeding him.

I stayed four days with the Lochs at Melbourne, and had the glory of taking Lady Loch in to dinner and being called, "Your Excellency." I like them very much, and they are evidently very popular. Sir. H. told me to remember him to you.

Sydney will be my headquarters for some time. I have taken an office there to finish up Scratchley's work. I have not heard yet how the publication of my book is getting on. I suppose you find it a more difficult matter than you expected. The whole Australian world is off to Tasmania for the summer. I am afraid I shall not be able to go, as I shall probably have to be in Brisbane for some time.

CHAPTER XVI.

BACK IN NEW GUINEA.

On the 17th of January 1887 Romilly for the third time sailed from England, bound first for Australia, and then wherever his duties as roving commissioner might call him. He was accompanied on this occasion as far as Melbourne by a sister who was going out for the sake of the voyage, and to stay with some friends in Australia. They broke the voyage by a short stay at Cairo, where they were most hospitably entertained by General Sir Frederick Stephenson, and where also they were joined by the late Lord Cairns, who had arranged to accompany my brother to New Guinea for a time, in search of sport and adventure.

The Hon. John Douglas, C.M.G., Resident at Thursday Island and formerly Premier of Queensland, had in the meantime been appointed to succeed General Sir Peter Scratchley in the High Commissionership of New Guinea. This appointment was undoubtedly somewhat of a blow and mortification to Romilly, who had cherished the hope and expectation that he, who had for nearly three

months after Sir Peter Scratchley's death administered the affairs of the Protectorate as acting High Commissioner, would have reaped the reward. His disappointment, however, did not prevent him from giving his cordial support and assistance as Deputy Commissioner to Mr. Douglas; but, as appears from his letters, he was very anxious to resign his appointment, and sever his connection with New Guinea, and the expected proclamation of sovereignty over the British Protectorate seemed to be likely to offer an opportunity of doing so. As will be seen, however, he was disappointed in this expectation, and his term of exile, which he had expected to be for only three months, actually lasted for fifteen. It is not surprising that he should feel himself forgotten and overlooked at home, and for the first time there is a tinge of bitterness in his letters.

CAIRO,
January 30, 1887.

Cairo is most amusing; there are all sorts of entertainments going on every day. Our General is giving balls and dinner parties in honour of my sister without end.

Henry Stanley is here on his way to relieve Emin Bey. If I was a free man and had not to be back soon and had not a sister to look after, I think

I should go with him. It will be a most interesting expedition. My life is made a burden to me here by officers of the Egyptian army asking me to recommend them to Stanley. I don't know if you take an interest in African travel, but the General gave a dinner here last night which I should think had never been equalled before. We had all the great African travellers at one table—Stanley, Schweinfurth, Junker, Brugsch Bey, Baker and Schliemann the Mycenæ man.

Of course, we talked shop all the evening, and to-day we have all been with Brugsch to see the mummies of the old kings of Egypt. Rameses II., who is Sesostris or the Pharaoh of the Bible, looks a bit older than he did nine months ago, when I saw him last, but considering that he is nearly four thousand years old, he wears very well.

SS. "GARRONE,"
February 11, 1887.

Latitude, 10° North; longitude, 41° East.

So now you know exactly where I am. The four parsons and their two wives are driving me mad. I don't mean that they have two wives among four, as two are R. C.'s. They have what they call choir practice all the morning and evening, with no very good result on Sunday that I have been able to observe.

February 12th.—It has been unpleasantly forced upon me that to-morrow is Sunday. The wretched parsons' women have been banging at "For those in peril on the sea" all the morning, till the little piano has at last collapsed. We are not in peril so far as I know, certainly the weather could not be finer, and I have at last persuaded the captain that it is meant as an insult to him in his management of the vessel.

February 13th (*Sunday*).—They are all hard at it on deck, and in a few moments I shall hear the result of a week's rehearsals of "For those in peril on the sea."

February 14th.—We cross the line this afternoon about five o'clock. I believe a dismal entertainment is to be got up on the old traditional lines, but we must do something to amuse ourselves or we should all die of stagnation and plethora. After dinner to-night Neptune's private secretary will come on board in a flaming boat and dripping oil-skins, with the usual bag of letters for the different passengers. These letters will probably be of the most personal character, and I tremble for C., as they have all to be read out on the quarter-deck. He will then announce the arrival of the Monarch himself to-morrow, attended by his wife Amphitrite, two mermaids, his barber, and a policeman. Then the usual nonsense will be gone through of shaving and ducking every one who has not crossed the line before, before they can receive the freedom of the

Ocean. I believe there are to be sports also under his immediate patronage. I wonder if all this bores you.

February 16th.—I did not write yesterday, as my whole day was taken up with official duties—that is to say, I had to be starter in the sports which resulted on Neptune's coming on board. That Monarch made his appearance about ten in the morning, with his wife and baby and members of his court. I must say that Amphitrite was the most improper-looking lady I have seen for some time. All the third-class passengers who had not crossed the line before were caught and shaved and ducked. It was not bad fun on the whole. In the afternoon there were all sorts of races, jumping, &c., which went on till five. In the evening we had a concert by Neptune's band, and songs by members of his staff. The programme contained selections from all the great operas, but after a very short time we discovered that the band only knew two tunes, "Rule Britannia" and "The Minstrel Boy." We also soon found out that the very ambitious songs in the programme were all omitted. The conductor began by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, the concert will begin by a 'collection' from 'Maritana,'" and off they went with "Rule Britannia." After that he said, "The next event on the programme is the 'Erl King,' sung by Mr. Bates, but as Mr. Bates is not here the band will give a 'collection' from 'Trovatore,'" and off they went with the "Minstrel

Boy." The "band," by-the-way, consisted of a flute, concertina, about two dozen combs and paper, a mop, a broom, and a squeegee, with a resined bench to rub them on. Then, after several more "collections" from different operas, we were told that Mr. Smith would recite "My Uncle;" "but," added the conductor, "as Mr. Smith does not know 'My Uncle,' he will give you 'The Wreck of the *Hesperus*.'" Mr. Smith had to be supported to his feet by two stewards, and got through about a verse and a half when he collapsed on the floor and went sound asleep.

What nonsense it is telling you all this! I must confess I laughed, and I think you would have done so at the utter absurdity of the whole thing

UNION CLUB, SYDNEY,
March 19, 1887.

. . . . My arrival here was hailed with glee by the papers, as they had not much to write about: "Arrival of another useless English official," "Lord Cairns and his bear-leader," "The lordly and unapproachable swell" (meaning me)! What do you think about that last one?

I go to Brisbane to-morrow, staying there probably only two days, and then up to Thursday Island, and if all happens as I hope, I shall not go to New Guinea at all. . . .

BRISBANE,
April 3, 1887.

We go north in two days as far as Cooktown, where a ship is waiting for me to take me to Port Moresby, where I must meet John Douglas and square up affairs. I am annoyed rather at having to go there, but he went off suddenly from Thursday Island down to East Cape to land about sixty kidnapped men and so our rendezvous has had to be changed. I have got a nice little yacht for a short time, and you would, I believe, really enjoy a cruise in the Pacific, though it is not quite such luxurious work as yachting in the Mediterranean.

BRISBANE,
May 16, 1887.

C. and I have just come back after a very successful little trip.* I have no adventures in particular to tell you of. We made a trip inland, and C. proved himself a good hand at roughing it, as I always supposed he would.

New Guinea affairs are in an awful mess, and I was delayed at Port Moresby because John Douglas was at the east end of the Protectorate and I had to

* A short account of this is given in "From my Verandah in New Guinea," under the head of "A Trip to the Laloki River."—ED.

wait for him. I am really beginning to see my way now to sever my connection with the country.

Sunday 22, 1887.

It is finally decided that I must make one exhaustive cruise of the Protectorate and what is left us of the Western Pacific High Commission, before finally ceding them to the Colonies.

I have a yacht of seventy tons at Cooktown called the *Hygeia.* The whole thing will take about three months. I sail from Cooktown on the 10th of July.

COOKTOWN,
June 14, 1887.

I am just off again to New Guinea, which will perhaps surprise you, but it was really impossible for me to do anything else. I am looking forward to a very quiet time there, and I hope to be able to do some writing. I have got much out of the habit of it lately. We are to have two men-of-war patrolling the coast, and I have besides a schooner yacht of 70 tons, the *Hygeia,* which is fairly comfortable. I hope to be able to return at the end of the year, but it is all very vague and uncertain. I sail to-morrow and have much to do in putting

finishing touches to the yacht. I do not for some reason dislike the idea of again going to New Guinea. I shall be glad of a few months' absolute quiet.

On July 2nd, 1887, he writes from the yacht *Hygeia*, New Guinea, as follows:—

There is a good deal of excitement here now, as fine country is being found every day, and during the last week or two, payable gold has been found. Expeditions are fitting out from all parts of Australia, and soon I expect to see a city of tents in this sleepy hollow. I am full of work, but I am rather lonely, as I have no one here that I can talk to much. Things must be settled here very soon now, I think. The rush for gold and land from Australia will compel them at home to proclaim the Queen's sovereignty sooner than they intended, and when that event happens I presume that I shall be at liberty to depart. I am most anxious to get home, but even now I cannot quite see my way to foretelling to a month as to when I shall be able to do so. I shall leave this country with mixed feelings. I have no reason to be particularly fond of it, but I have been more intimately connected with it than any one else, and at the present moment it really seems as if it had a future before it.

YACHT "HYGEIA," NEW GUINEA,
July 4, 1887.

I am rather lonely here, though the *Rapid* has not yet gone. No doubt you have heard by telegram of the discoveries of land and gold here. I am not sorry, as it must bring things to a head. In the meantime a lot of missionaries have been murdered at a place about a hundred miles from here, and the party dispatched to inquire into the matter were attacked in overwhelming numbers, and forced to fall back on their boats—not, however, before they had shot a number of natives.

I am keeping the *Rapid* till Douglas arrives, as he is not here at present. As you know I hate having to punish these people, but I am afraid that this time it must be done effectually.

I have just come back from an inland journey to look at some new country. I don't know how we ever managed to get back, as our horses were all unbroken and stampedes and casualties happened every day. I got on well enough till the last day, when about fifteen miles from home, my horse bolted at the sight of a large python, and as we were at that time riding through grass ten feet high, I was dragged off my saddle by the grass, and got two baddish kicks in the ribs.

The weather is cool and pleasant. The people all seem to me to have changed. They are very sullen, and refuse to hold much intercourse with us. I am

afraid that when settlement takes place it will be the old story of unlimited shooting.

DINNER ISLAND,
July 13, 1887.

I have had no opportunity of sending this yet. As you see I am down at the east end, still in company with the *Rapid*. In about a week's time we go to Moresby Island, *i.e.*, *Rapid*, myself (*Hygeia*), *Dart* and *Harrier*, to punish five villages for killing Chinamen. I hate the work, and so do the sailors, but in this case it is necessary. Douglas and I have made a very satisfactory arrangement. We do not interfere at all with each other, and I have complete control of the whole south and south-east with my *Hygeia*, while he sticks to Port Moresby. I shall have no living on shore, and therefore run small chance of fever.

"HYGEIA,"
July 22, 1887.

. . . . I returned yesterday night from Moresby Island, where I have been for the last three days, with the *Rapid* and *Harrier*, bombarding villages we could not reach, and burning those we could. We smashed all the war canoes, and fired into all the natives we saw. I myself only took a shot gun



From a photograph VILLAGE IN NEW GUINEA *To face p. 287*

and potted a few domestic fowls. I suppose we must have killed a good many of them, as I could hear the women howling their death chants all the nights we were there. To-day I hear reports of fresh murders in Milne Bay. We recovered four of the skulls of the murdered men, and had one man speared. One village was full of pitfalls with spears sticking up from below. I landed a lot of men in the *Victoria* at Moresby Island, and I have no doubt they are the ringleaders in any mischief which goes on. I don't care about the work; there is no credit to be got, but plenty of abuse if one does wrong.

The "Rapids" have just come from the West Coast of Africa, and say they would far sooner be back there than here. Books too I am badly off for.

I have just been interrupted by our native allies of the last four days coming to be paid for their services. It was rather amusing; each man on getting his present gravely said, "Good morning," meaning "Thank you." They really behaved very pluckily in carrying our terms to the different villages. Our action has, I think, secured the safety of white men within thirty or forty miles of this place. I think I might write a few "Yachting notes" of these parts; other parts have been written about, but these islands and their inhabitants are very little known. I have got a very good private secretary in young Frank Lawes, son of the

missionary, but he has had many attacks of fever, and is often unfit for work. I am nearly as isolated here as in the old days of New Britain. I think I must get blown there by accident, as I should like to see the place again.

"HYGEIA," NEW GUINEA,
July 29, 1887.

. . . . I am writing in a Turkish bath. Everything is wet and steamy, as it has been raining incessantly for three days as it only knows how to rain in New Guinea. I feel as if I could cheerfully murder my best friend. In despair I am driven to literature, and have sketched out a plot for a new book entirely on this country. No doubt *when* it comes out it will shake the world to its foundations. "Ran away from Home, or Little Hugh's Adventures among the Cannibals," to which will be added some "Travellers' Lies," by the same author. Perhaps it might be dramatised, and you should be the young Likiliki, only daughter of the chief of Basilaki, who on seeing me about to be sacrificed and having previously been much struck by the whiteness of my skin, saves my life, just as the tomahawk is descending, by casting over me your grass petticoat. I am then adopted by you; you administer a gentle emetic to do away with the evil results of the fattening process, which I have been undergoing for the past week, and just as the

emetic is about to assert its sway, I think the curtain might very properly fall. A boy whom I took back to his tribe the other day, was actually saved in this manner. The women, just as he was going to be killed, took their petticoats off and cast them over him. It would be highly realistic, but perhaps more suitable for the French stage. Perhaps it would do for a ballet at the Eden. Of course I should be captured in the traditional dress of the Englishman abroad—tall white hat, green veil, large check trousers, grey frock-coat, glasses over my shoulder, and Murray's Guide Book in my hand. On learning that your grass petticoat has saved my life and that it is of so sacred a nature that no man dare spear me through it, I should execute a *pas seul*, during which I should gradually discard every article of European clothing till at last I stood up in the same garb as my captors. This would be a delicate way of implying that for the future I cast in my lot with them. What do you think of it? I never knew that I had such a dramatic imagination before. I hear natives on shore shouting "Man-of-war." It may be the Admiral, whom I expect.

"HYGEIA," S.E. NEW GUINEA,
August 6, 1887.

The *Harrier* goes across to-morrow to Cooktown and will not be back for some time. I am afraid

I am off for a cruise to the eastward for about a month, to communicate with the *Dart* and look up the shelling fleet. Then I meet the Admiral here about Sept. 18th. After I have met him, I shall go to Cooktown for stores and news. All my letters have gone to Port Moresby instead of coming here, and the consequence is I got none from any one last *Harrier* mail. It would be an easy enough job for me to run down there for them, but it would take us a fortnight to get back, and I cannot spare the time. I have nothing of the smallest interest to tell you except that we are all well, which is always something. The natives are having a sort of epidemic among themselves, but it does not affect us. Charles is making a great collection for W., and the natives watch his proceedings with amazement and say that certainly all white men are mad. The shell fishery is going, I think, to be really valuable. The first three months of this year we exported £50,000 worth.

We met with a great misfortune to-day: our only good whaleboat was lost, and as we are entirely dependent on boats for food and amusement, it really is a serious matter.

"HYGEIA," SLADE ISLAND, NEW GUINEA,
August 10, 1887.

I have about five minutes to write in, as M., of the

Rapid, is going almost at once, having only just come here. I have been most awfully knocked about for the last three days, trying to get here dead to windward against strong tides. This is not the part of the world for sailing ships. A rather curious thing happened to us at a place called Margaret Island, where we had to anchor for the night. They belong to the same tribe as the people whose villages we had to destroy the other day. On anchoring, lots of canoes came off, but to my amazement all full of women, or young boys dressed as women, and one man in each. Without going into details, every inducement was offered to my people to go ashore singly, when they would all have been tomahawked. I have never seen this trick played before. I can tell you nothing of my plans, as they change almost daily. I think, however, I shall go to the Woodlarks to investigate a supposed murder case there, and then return to Dinner Island to wait for the Admiral. We are all very well; in fact, living as much as I do on board, the chances of catching fever are greatly reduced.

We have had no case of sickness yet. I am sorry to say there is more burning and shooting to be done by the *Rapid*, but I shall not be present at it, as I cannot afford to run away to leeward again.

Probably our operations will have been in the London papers before you get this, but as they are only Chinamen's murders we are avenging, not much interest is taken in the matter.

September 7, 1887.

. . . . Life has been very dull for the last fortnight. I have been writing hard, and have half finished the MS. of a new book. I am afraid it is stupid, and I am sure it is dull; so when it comes out don't read it. While I write I still look forward to another three weeks without news of importance to me. It is rather trying. All my books were finished long ago, and I have perforce to occupy the position of the man who said, "I don't read books; I write them." I am very much in the dark as to the state of my private affairs at home, and altogether I am a dissatisfied individual. I have no doubt it will all come right soon, however. I have had no news from any one for nearly three months.

"HYGEIA,"
October 2, 1887.

. . . . I have returned to Port Moresby, from which place I am writing. In two days I take Douglas to Yule Island, and return here again, and then I go to Cooktown for some necessary repairs to the yacht. I myself have been three months without letters, but I found a good batch here from you and others. The more I try to get rid of New Guinea the more it sticks to me. If a certain Act passes in the Queensland Parliament, making a per-

manent appropriation of £15,000 a year, then the Imperial Government will proclaim sovereignty, and do other things they have promised. But in Queensland they are on the verge of a general election, and most people say that the present Government will be turned out. If that happens, we are as far off settlement as ever. My position here is a disagreeable one, and might be made much more unpleasant if Douglas were not the thorough gentleman he is. You will be glad to hear that I hope in a fortnight or so to have finished my new book. I have been wonderfully well all the time I have been here.

COOKTOWN,
October 19, 1887.

As you see, I have come across here to refit, and may be here for a fortnight. My principal object in coming here is to try to stir up the Queensland Premier to get the New Guinea Bill passed this session. I find, to my great satisfaction, that it has passed its first reading, and I do not think that it will meet with much opposition, for Queensland M.P.'s, towards the end of the session, will consent to anything in order to get home to their sheep-shearing. As I cannot leave New Guinea till it has passed, I naturally take an interest in it. There is no doubt that I shall have to return to New

Guinea for some time—short, I hope—pending the settlement of the country.

In a letter dated Cooktown, October 30th, 1887, he says: "I have been spending a dull existence here, getting the yacht refitted. The only news of interest is that the New Guinea Bill has passed, and now, I imagine, things will very soon be settled."

The following extract from "The Colonial Year-Book for 1890" may be here quoted in explanation:—"The Queensland Premier, Mr. Griffith, drew up a memorandum for submission to the governments of the other colonies, suggesting a scheme for the administration of New Guinea. He proposed that Queensland should administer the territory, guaranteeing £15,000 annually, but receiving proportionate contributions from the other colonies to meet the expenses of the government of the new territory. The Imperial Government would be asked to make an initial contribution. The sovereignty of the Queen would then be established over the British portion of the island, and an administration appointed with power to legislate. Mr. Griffith recommended that native interests should be protected, and that the deportation of natives and the trade in liquor, arms, and ammunition should be placed under the control of Queensland. The purchase of land, except from the government, should

be advised and prohibited. Other matters would be under the direction of the government of Queensland and the executive council of that colony. The scheme was, after full consideration, declined by the Imperial Government; but the advantages of the new settlement, backed by public opinion in Australia, were so far recognised that on October 27th, 1888, it was created into a separate possession and government, and Dr. (now Sir) William Macgregor, K.C.M.G., appointed the administrator."

The next letter finds the writer back in New Guinea.

PORT MORESBY,
November 29, 1887.

As I told you in my last, I have to be in charge now, probably till sovereignty is proclaimed. That may be at any time, and I do not quite see what I become. Nothing, I suppose, and so I suppose they will recall me. After to-day I shall be the only inhabitant here; that is to say, all the missionaries are away, and all officials also. However, I expect *Rapid* and *Harrier* in a day or two. It is really awfully dull, and I sha'n't be sorry to get rid of the whole business. Forbes has returned, but has been very unlucky on his last trip. His camp was looted by the natives, and he and his people

lost everything they had, besides a quantity of valuable instruments belonging to us. They had to shoot one man, and it is probable that a hitherto friendly tribe will now be our enemies. I had a letter from you the other day nearly five months old.

GOVERNMENT BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
December 6, 1887.

MY DEAR M.,—My plans are still vague. No one seems to know anything about the future arrangements in this country. We are expecting sovereignty to be proclaimed any day, and then I presume my connection with it ceases, as after that event my commission would be inoperative. I *suppose* I should come home, but I never allow myself to make plans, as I am generally certain to be wrong. However, let's hope for the best. Spring of 1888 might see me home, but again it might not. I am entirely alone here; all "my lovely companions are withered and gone," by which I mean, they've all got fever and bolted to Australia.

Charles!—you remember Charles?—wishes to be married to a native girl. He says, "You marry me in English fashion to Bezina; by-a-bye, when I go to England, she look up some other fellow." I don't think this is moral of Charles, and I have told him so, but to my astonishment he said, "Well, I suppose I must get married in New Guinea fashion,

but New Guinea fashion plenty dear, English fashion only two bob!" It is true that my fees for marrying Christian natives in other parts were only two bob, of which fact he is aware, while the tomahawks and tobacco, requisite for New Guinea fashion, will cost him at least thirty shillings. I am not quite pleased with Charles.

GRANVILLE, NEW GUINEA,
December 14, 1887.

Our mail should be in to-day, but I never expect it till I see it. I think the state of this country is worse now than I have ever known it. We have told the natives not to fight, but to come to us with their grievances, and we will redress them. The consequence is, that during the last week four deputations of natives have come to me, with accounts of their people having been killed by other tribes, and asking for justice. I have no power, either legal or physical, to punish their aggressors, and so I am in the agreeable position of having to act illegally or break the most solemn promises.

Whatever I do, I must be wrong. If my hands were not tied, I could have the whole country quiet in a few months. I have, I am happy to say, been very well though very dull. The dulness does not matter much however, as I write about five hours a day.

December 22, 1887.

.... The mail has come in, and there is nothing from you. In fact, except a few official letters, there is nothing from anybody; it is too sickening. One of my officers writes to me that if I do not relieve him from where he is now, he will go mad. I think I shall do the same, but no one offers to relieve me.

GRANVILLE, NEW GUINEA,
December 1887.

MY DEAR L.,—No words can express the intense dulness of this place, but to-day Chalmers has come back from the East, so I shall have one person to talk to. Every one, natives and whites, are ill except me. Natives dying off at a great pace.

They all ask me to wear *white* clothes at night, lest they should mistake me for the devil and put an arrow through me. By this you will perceive that the Papuan devil is *black*.

The big yearly native trading fleet has just come in, full of sago, and the rows and fights that go on all night entirely destroy sleep. The old women fight like demons, and there are broken heads every morning to mend. As they won't let me sleep, I go to see them fight. If they were younger and more beautiful, I would give them a knee.

CHAPTER XVII.

HOPE DEFERRED.

THE commencement of the year 1888 still found my brother in New Guinea, sick at heart, and his prospect of escape apparently getting more and more remote every day.

GOVERNMENT BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
January 16, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—I have been entertaining Russians, which is the only piece of fun I've had for a long time. Not expecting any man-of-war at this time of year, I was much surprised the other day to see one outside the harbour. She turned out to be the *Rynda* with a Grand Duke on board. They stayed about a fortnight, ate all my food, drank all my drinks, demoralised all the natives, swore strange oaths, and went away when they had squeezed the place quite dry. The Grand Duke is a capital fellow. I took him inland shooting for a couple of days, but he very nearly shot me several times, and I was glad to get back.

I should like you to see my cassowary "Sam." He follows me everywhere, eats ten pounds of jam a day, and is the terror of all the dogs and pigs in the village.

I hear Lord Gormanston is appointed to this place, but do not know if it is true.

I ought to get promotion shortly.

GOVERNMENT BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
February 16, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—It is a lamentable fact that I have received no letters from any one for two months. I know a mail has left Cooktown and suppose that she has my letters on board, but as we have been having severe gales, and the ship left a fortnight ago, and the average passage is three days, it seems likely that they are now at the bottom of the sea.

It appears probable that we shall shortly be in a state of starvation here My supplies, and all the other supplies in the settlement, are nearly done, and there seems to be no more prospect of any more coming. Our monthly steamer (which never brings me any letters) is to be knocked off shortly, so we shall be once more in as isolated a position as we ever were. I have got a young married woman staying here with me. It is rather a curious position to be put in, but as she is the wife of one of our officers, and there was absolutely no

other place here she could stay in, I was forced to put her up, and brave whatever scandal may come out of it. I think people are too sensible to say much, however. The Colonial Office tells me I am to leave this place shortly, which I suppose means coming home for a short time. I want a change, though I am not actually ill. I won't finish this now, as there will probably be a letter from you if the mail comes in soon.

BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
March 11, 1888.

It never rains but it pours. The steamer came in yesterday, my yacht has just come round the point, and the natives report the *Ellangowan* outside. We are all still well, but bored, bored, bored. The natives defy us at many places now, and I am not surprised at it. Two expeditions have been plundered and returned into Port Moresby with handkerchiefs round their waists, and nothing more. They barely escaped with their lives. There is a tremendous outcry going on in Australia at our want of energy in making indiscriminate retaliations. As you know, I have no legal power under the Order in Council, by which the Protectorate is governed, to do anything to natives, and if a single native is shot by my orders I can legally be tried for murder. Therefore I intend to do nothing. It is a horrible state of things, and

if it goes on much longer our credit must be lastingly damaged. The natives here say, "Of course you mean to fight the people of the St. Joseph River," and when I tell them I mean to do nothing of the kind, they think we are afraid, and their manner towards us is changing in consequence. It will take some big disaster to bring home to the authorities that things are in an impossible condition. I am building and making gardens, but I take no real interest in it as I shall never see the result of my labours. I sleep at the mission now, as my house is being painted. Chalmers and I hit it off as well as ever.

I hope to send home my completed MS. in three weeks' time. I have finished it to all intents and purposes with old sorcery stories, which I had great trouble in getting, and had to "Bowdlerize" a good deal.

NEW GUINEA,
March 25, 1888.

I am writing at least ten days before the mail goes, but I start to-morrow to the Gulf (westwards) for a final tour, and I may not be back before the steamer has left.

April 3, 1888.

I continue my letter, as the steamer is not yet in. I have been away just a week, on a visit to a large and turbulent district in the west. I was better received, I think, than I have ever been anywhere. Deputations from the tribes with whom the Motu-Motu people (the district in question) were at war, came down with peace offerings which were all accepted. My face was black with nose rubbing, and the chiefs held me one by each hand, and took me all over the place. Any one who could get hold of any part of my shirt, did so, and altogether it was a very satisfactory visit. I was taken into the sacred houses, and one was commenced in my honour, a heathen rite of which the missionaries did not at all approve. They say that a deputation is to call on me at Port Moresby in ten canoes holding fifty men each. I sincerely hope they won't do anything of the sort. As it is probably my last trip in New Guinea, I am glad it has been a successful one, and done some good. I am in a great state of bustle now, getting things in order for handing over my office. I am quite in the dark as to what may be required of me on MacGregor's arrival. The steamer has arrived, and there is nothing for me. No date is fixed yet for the proclamation. It is really an awful nuisance.

In a letter dated May 6th, 1888, he mentions that

he was about to shift his quarters to a place called Bo-era, about fifty miles from Port Moresby, and live under canvas, for the sake of getting some shooting. He says, "I shall take my cutter, and give myself up entirely to sport. I shall also send horses and boats, and, at the end of three or four weeks, I may have a paper for Murray." Apparently, however, he changed his plans, for I find no record of this trip, unless the four days' ride mentioned in the next letter refers to it.

BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
June 1, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—I hope you are not calling me names because you don't get all the letters you deserve to get. There is no good explaining to you about the few opportunities of writing, etc., because, if I do so too often, you will disbelieve me, and finally come to believe that we get our letters every morning at breakfast time, and that the evening mail closes at 5 p.m., or 5. 30, with an extra stamp.

While I am writing, I feel rather like that fox-hunting squire in some book—one of Miss Braddon's, isn't it?—who sat down to dinner in his dirty clothes instead of having a warm bath. I don't mind confessing to you that I have not had a bath for four days, as I have just come back from a long ride, and when it comes to a choice of being dirty or being

partially dismembered by an alligator, I say, give me dirt! Sam is flourishing, and sends you his love. It was unfortunate that the poor bird should have a severe illness, the result, it is supposed, of swallowing about a hundred pounds worth of Government tools, just as I was hatching some dozens of young chickens. The tools are missing, and we can account for their absence in no other manner. Meanwhile the chickens have grown too large for Sam to swallow. I hope it will be a lesson to him. I am sure you would like him at T.

I wish I had something to read here. Fancy having to go through all the old Waverleys again in desperation. I have also a complete edition of Burns, with all the suppressed poems, but it "gars me greet," whatever that may mean, having to read them over so often. Oh me! as another great author says, I shall be glad to see the last of this country. We have nothing to eat, and nothing to drink and shortly I shall have nothing wherewithal to clothe myself. My figure has attained a degree of *svelte*ness as never was, and I am wondering whether my fate will be the same as the chubby lad Augustus who insisted daily on the nasty soup being taken away.

The faithful Charles, being an ambitious youth, has left me to better himself, and I have given him a small place here at £100 a year. It is a nuisance, as he understood my idiosyncrasies, and remained calm and imperturbable in the midst of my worst

fits of "devilish badness." I am now attended by three small black boys, who wear the cuttiest of cutty sarks, and who are in such a mortal terror of me that they have to back each other up like pointers when coming into the room. They are not very well trained yet. The other day I found laid out for me for breakfast a dirty old blanket for a table-cloth. On it was a Dutch cheese, with a whole nest of cockroaches inside, a tin of sardines covered with a thick blue mould, a piece of bread with very evident signs of their teeth on it, a bottle of brandy, a bottle of whisky, a pot of office gum, and about ten spoons of all sizes, to which they evidently attached some superstitious importance. This is an absolute fact.

I am sure there is nothing in this country to make one cheerful. In old days it was all very well; the country was quite new, and there was always a little excitement and novelty. But now, I am so accustomed to everything that I feel a change—say to Piccadilly—for a short time would be almost like a voyage of exploration. I do not mind the discomforts of the thing, though I am quite old enough to appreciate comfort; but the whole responsibility of the Protectorate is thrown on my shoulders. Any day there may be an outbreak of natives; they *hate* us as white men, but me they personally like (I hope you don't think this conceited); and I feel sure that any time during the past six months, if it had not been for my personal influence, there would have

been a rising, in which, with the odds a hundred to one against us, we should have had a poor chance. It is a strange thing that every other colonising country—France, Germany, Holland, Spain—take adequate steps for the protection of their officers, either by fortifying their residences or providing efficient bodyguards and police. We are the greatest colonising country in the world, but we never dream of doing such a thing.

Everything is left to the individual enterprise of the officer appointed. If he is possessed of tact, he possibly, or rather probably, comes off all right; if not, he comes to grief. A few questions are asked in the House, and he is either let slide (or rather his memory), or else he costs his country millions in retaliations which could have been avoided by an original outlay of a few hundreds. It is in the few hundreds that we have always come to grief. I have no wish or intention to expose the fallacy of our system in my own person, but some poor devil in the future may have to do so.

There! I have let off a certain amount of steam, which I am not often tempted to do. I daresay it will astonish you, but it has been rankling for some years. I daresay I shall do myself much harm, as I make no secret of my opinions, but I don't care much. In the meantime, like the young Augustus Edward, my thoughts are turning bedward, as it has just struck twelve, and I have four days' dirt to remove. You tell me N. is going to Japan. I should

not be at all surprised to see him walking in here some day, demanding big game to shoot. Would you like to have an animal which is described to me as a cross between an alligator and a porcupine—very savage, and in the habit of devastating whole villages? What a nice animal to turn loose in T.? Perhaps K. would be equal to the occasion if it came to shooting it, while you would have to drag it home by the tail. Such an animal has been described to me, and I have sent two men into the country where it is supposed to live, as I can't go myself. In the meantime, I don't believe in it till I see it. It lives in the same country where dwell the men with tails. I think your little cart would be much improved by having a man with a tail sitting behind. For the present I must shut up.

I wish I could write you something more amusing and instructive, but one's wits all go wool-gathering in this country.

NEW GUINEA,
June 1, 1888.

. . . I have only just returned from an expedition and have missed two of our monthly mails. Things have got more unsatisfactory every day. For more than a year I have thought that nothing ought to delay the settlement of affairs here, and now that prospect seems as far off as ever. People talk of

the end of September and the end of the year, but I cannot say that it will take place in five years, or ten for that matter. My recall has been promised me long ago, but I suppose, because I know more of New Guinea affairs than any one else, they keep me hanging on. I was disgusted enough six months ago, but now I look upon myself as a sort of first-class misdemeanant, and have to serve my time without even knowing how long my sentence is to last. There is no use grumbling about it, though; I daresay lots of people are worse off than I am.

June 4, 1888.

The mail is in, and as is usual there is no letter.

BUNGALOW,
June 20, 1888.

We are all alive, at least all of us that count for anything. I suppose we may be said to be hibernating, though we have not nearly such good times as the alligators, snakes, and other reptiles who bury themselves in the mud and go to sleep and wait for better times. We have some point of resemblance, however, in our hibernation with them. They voluntarily dispose themselves to do without supplies for a certain number of months, whilst

apparently we shall be compelled to do so, as all our supplies are to be cut off, and after you receive this letter I really cannot tell you when you will get another. No doubt there may be an accidental opportunity. We are in rather an amusing position; amusing, at least, to a dweller in another land. I believe the Colonial Office has forgotten our existence. It has happened on one occasion that I could not remind them of mine for ten months. I know nothing, absolutely nothing, of what is going on in Australia or at home. As we must live somehow, I have had to order food from three places, Thursday Island, Cooktown, and Brisbane, which must in any case cost me an awful lot of money, and possibly, all three consignments will arrive just as I am ordered to leave the country. I look upon the thing as a vast joke, which in future years may be amusing to look back on. Even the elements are against us, as I am reduced to my last fortnight's water on account of the unprecedented drought, and for the last four or five days we, that is my stockman and I, for besides him I am alone, have been riding out to look for some place where we can camp our horses and cattle, and our own unimportant selves. I do nothing at all, as I have no interest in doing anything. It is quite on the cards that there may be another mission massacre very shortly. If there is, I shall do nothing, because I have only sufficient men to protect this place and because I have no legal authority to cause the death of a single native

for any offence whatever that he can commit. I do not wish to figure in the dock myself on a charge of murder. Of course my doing nothing in a case like this would do the country and ourselves a lasting injury, but without legal authority I am not prepared to undertake the responsibility which every one seeks to place on my shoulders. I did muster up a little energy and go out for a couple of days to one of the big hunts the other day. We got about 500 kangaroos and some cassowaries, and I got my boots ripped by an old boar, which had the effect of putting more life into me than anything has done for a long time. I shot the old brute, however. I still mean to write a paper* about the big hunts; they are certainly exciting and unique in their way. . . . I feel the loss of Charles a good deal. I have a Singhalese servant now who is good enough in his way, and two stupid boys who put bottles of brandy and office gum pots on the table for breakfast. As usual I must break off till the steamer comes in on Monday, and then I will write more.

June 26, 1888.

Mail just in. Goes first thing in the morning. I got three letters from you, which I was very glad to get.

* A paper on one of these hunts appears in the next chapter. —Ed.

. . . . It is wonderful how a mail cheers one up, and I have heard that an end of our long waiting is really in sight. Of course, as I told you at the beginning of this letter, I have received consignments of food from three places altogether, just as I am probably leaving the place.

We are very well here, but we have no water. I am now paying sixpence a bucket for that article, and soon it will be worth its weight in gold. I have such a tremendous consignment of lager beer, however, that we shall have to bathe, make our tea, clean our teeth, &c., in that mixture.

I must stop, as I shall be up all night writing.

BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
June 23, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—The mail is not in yet, but should be the day after to-morrow. After that we are to be left to our fate, as the service is to be discontinued, and the last link which binds us to the outer world will be severed. The time will come when the few whites left here will begin to look at each other with wolfish eyes (*vide* the "Tales of the Sea"), and dodge each other about, waiting for a chance to stick his neighbour in the back for the good of the community. Horrid picture, isn't it?

I went, by favour of a certain chief of my acquaintance, a-hunting the wallaby the other day, and felt

in good cheer, as the wallaby is the fearfulest of animals. But having been posted in the place of honour—O me!—like our friend Venator, I began to mistrust the coming of a wild boar my way. To quote the words of that eminent sportsman, "I hope my words charm you to an attention." But, marry, I felt warm throughout when I perceived that my suspicions were not without foundation, and in less time than it takes to write an old boar was on the top of me, and ripped open my boot. He harmed me as little as possible, that I might live the longer and afford him the more sport.

June 26, 1888.

Mail just in, and one letter from you. I think from my last letters that there may be a chance of my getting away from here soon.

Bungalow, New Guinea,
July 4, 1888.

My dear L.,—Would you like to hear an adventure, and a very unpleasant one, too? I went some five days ago to a river called the Edith, at the mouth of which there is a dangerous bar. It is the scene of my old exploit in the *Blackall*, where I caught the worst fever I ever had. I anchored my cutter off the

mouth, and attempted to shoot the bar in a whale-boat. There were twenty-two people in the boat, and consequently she was too heavy to rise properly to a sea. It was getting dark, and a very fresh south-easter was blowing, while the tide and current of the river were running against the wind. There was a good mile of heavy breakers. I went in against my better judgment, but Chalmers, who was my guest, wished to get ashore, as the next day was Sunday, and he wished to hold a native service; so off we went. Before getting to the first line of breakers I took off my boots, which were long ones up to the knee, as I felt sure we should be capsized. The first line did us. A huge wave picked us up like a feather, and the next second we were all in the water and the boat bottom up. The anchor in the bow of the boat caught the bottom in about twelve feet of water, and the boat stuck fast. I was on the lee side, and Chalmers and two other men fell on the top of me, so I came to the surface rather short of breath, and the moment my head came above water a huge wave struck me, knocked me over and over, and I came up again fifty yards from the boat. At that moment I said to myself, "It's all up," as we had a mile of heavy breakers between us and the shore; but as soon as I could get my breath and collect my wits, I shouted out, "Every one to the boat." They were all swimming in different directions, as they did not know what they were doing. My first thought after that was for

the wife and baby of one of my men, named Jack Tanna. I found Jack close alongside of me, and said at once, "Jack, where is your wife and boy?" He replied, "I don't know, sir; I think they drown. I look after you." At that moment Charles called out to me, "I've got Jack's boy." So we swam back to him and helped Jack's wife and the boy to the boat. Matters were not much better when we got there. Huge seas were breaking over us, knocking us head over heels away from the boat; but we managed between us to keep the child as much out of the water as possible. It was quite unconscious, and I thought dead. I swam back once more to the boat, diving through each wave, and said to Chalmers: "Is it stick to the boat or try and swim ashore?" Chalmers said, "I can't do it, Romilly." The natives then began to set up a howl, saying, "Is this the end? must we all die here?" but I stopped them, and said, "Let us try to let the anchor go." At that moment a big sea came and lifted the boat high in the air, and the gunwale came down on my head and stunned me. I went down under the boat, and the natives cried out, "Mr. Romilly's drowned—Mr. Romilly's drowned." But Jack Tanna and Charles dived for me and brought me up, and I recovered myself enough to swim a little. Every one then left the boat, and the bad swimmers got hold of oars to help them, and in course of time we got to a shallow sandbank about half way to the shore. Here I fell down through

the knock I had on the head, and should certainly have been drowned if my men, Charles and a mission boy, had not held me up by main force. Charles was crying, not for himself, but for me. But while we were resting upon the sandbank—still with the waves breaking over us, and four men holding on to me, as I was too stunned to help myself, the cry of "Alligator! alligator!" was raised. We knew that there were more alligators on the bar of this river than in any other in New Guinea. Chalmers was actually upset by one. But to make a long story short, we all got ashore. Four men were carrying me, as I could not look after myself, though under ordinary circumstances I was probably a better swimmer than any of them. The strange part of the story is to come. I had taken off all my clothes, and was consequently stark naked. Charles had a water-tight box of matches, and we immediately made a fire, but we had not been ashore half an hour before a case of whisky of mine was washed ashore, immediately followed by a case of beer; various other things followed belonging to members of my party, but my own loss was about £200. I lost eight guns and rifles, a chronometer, a watch, a lot of clothes, pistols, trade, and a lot of things of no value to any one but myself. We were very lucky to save our lives, and so I do not grudge the things we lost. The way my men stuck to me was splendid.

GOVERNMENT BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
July 23, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—I see no chance of coming to London. I have given up speculating about my movements now, as the ways of the Colonial Office are inscrutable and desperately wicked. I have invented a new vice. I don't mean a mechanical appliance for holding wood or iron—but a wicked vice—a new sin in fact. This is the manufacture of an elixir, the secret of which is known to me, and to one other, and by which we intend to make our fortunes. I believe the plant from which it is obtained is identical with the "coca" of which you may have heard. Its properties are, to take you for the time being quite out of yourself, and to transplant you to realms of bliss. Whisky in sufficient quantities will do the same, but *this* is supposed to be quite harmless. You must not suppose that I *really* eat or drink the stuff, but I mean to make money out of it, if it is really a new anæsthetic. My colleague in sin is a missionary, and we made our discovery in the course of our investigations into sorcery.

A cage is being constructed of exceeding size and strength for the removal of Sam to England. If I could only have got the animal, which is a cross between the alligator and the porcupine, I would have hired a showman, bought a big drum, and made my appearance at T. in a becoming manner. A few posters over London, with "Romilly's coming,"

would have aroused interest. I must leave off talking nonsense. I think I may really leave this country in about six weeks.

GOVERNMENT BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
August 8, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—You see I am still writing under the old address, and feel as if I should do so for the rest of my natural life.

I suppose a day of deliverance will come eventually. I should not mind waiting, if I had any certainty as to what the Colonial Office people intended to do with me, but I suppose they don't know themselves, so can't tell me.

Your garden in London up on the tiles sounds charming. You and the cats, who, I suppose, are the only other inhabitants, must have fine times, and if you occasionally drop a spade on to the head of an elderly passenger in the street, it all comes in the day's work. I also have a garden, but I make many mistakes with it, not being a horticulturist. I believe we were all nearly poisoned the other day, as I planted some mysterious salad plant, and when it came up we tried to eat it, but the effects upon us were totally unlike anything I have ever seen produced by a salad. I have become a great engineer, and my roads, bridges, dams, &c., will be the wonder of future generations.

During the last fortnight I have turned into a farmer, as we now have got some milking cows. A swarm of natives collect every morning to see the cows milked, an operation which they have never seen before. They think us the queerest creatures, and are disgusted at the idea of drinking milk. They say the idea is more repulsive to them than eating human flesh. They do not object to tinned milk though.

They have heard that I am probably leaving the country soon, and my life is made a burden to me by the crowds that come up to the house every day begging. They say that I should feel sorry when I have left for not giving them more whilst I had the chance. I assure them that I shall feel no pangs on the subject whatever.

This is a stupid letter, but what can one write but stupidity. I feel as if I should never have an idea in my head again.

NEW GUINEA,
August 12, 1888 (*St. Grouse*).

. . . . I think our affairs are drawing to a close now, at least it is positively announced that MacGregor is to be here in the *Opal* on the 23rd of this month. I have decided to stay here till MacGregor arrives. I wish to stay till I am superseded, though it is much like being in prison.

I hear that it is reported in Australia that I am to be sent to the New Hebrides. I don't know what that may mean, but I remember your telling me that Sir R. Herbert had said something of the sort to you confidentially. I don't wish to go into the Consular Service, and I would sooner remain in New Guinea than live in the New Hebrides. I suppose I shall hear all about it in a few weeks, and it is a matter which will require careful consideration.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A PAPUAN FIRE HUNT.

THE following description of a hunt in New Guinea may be appropriately inserted here. It was no doubt intended for some magazine, but has, I believe, never been published. The hunt is evidently the one referred to in the letters of June 20th and June 23rd, 1888.

"Gaeta wishes you to go and see his hunt to-morrow."

Such was the message I received on a certain Friday afternoon. Mr. Chalmers, the well-known member of the London Missionary Society, was sitting with me on my verandah, and he immediately said, "Let us go and see for ourselves what it is like." I consented at once, and sent a note off to the other side of the harbour ordering a sufficiency of horses for the day's work. "Who is Gaeta," I asked Chalmers. "He is a Koitapuan," said Chalmers. "The Koitapuans have the right of hunting inland as far as the river, and though the country virtually belongs to the Motuans, they still observe the old

tradition of accepting the invitations of the Koitapuans to hunt."

"But who is Gaeta?" I repeated. "Gaeta is no one in particular," said Chalmers, "but this day's hunt is called by his name, as he is the originator of the hunt." "Only a short walk," said one, while the others said it was to be held at a place on the northern slopes of the coast range. As a matter of fact we rode quite fourteen miles before we saw any preparations or signs of hunting. However, the day was not very hot, and once over the range we jogged along pleasantly enough over the undulating plains, which in this part of New Guinea extend for some twenty miles from the coast into the interior. Each one of our guides carried in his hand a bundle of small hunting spears, and every now and then, as a wallaby scuttled away under our feet out of the long grass, a shower of them would be thrown with utter indifference to the safety of our own, or our horse's legs. The morning was one of the most beautiful I have ever seen. Far away to the northward rose the peaks of the great Owen Stanley Range, cut out sharp and clear in the early morning atmosphere. It was hard to believe that no one had been up even to the foot of the lower spurs in less time than fourteen days. It seemed, so clear was the air, that if we pushed on we could be there by dinner time. We stopped by mutual consent at the summit of the coast range, about eight hundred feet above the sea, to breathe our horses and to

admire this beautiful sight. But there was one member of our party for whom this particular view had nothing but unpleasant recollections, and who therefore did not care to waste time by looking at it any longer than he could help. He had been a member of two of the many expeditions which had been dispatched to conquer the great mountain, so he said, "We had better push on, sir; I've said 'Good-bye to Owen Stanley, for the last time, and I don't wish to see any more of him." Our guides too thought it was a sad waste of time, so we jogged on down the range till we came to the plains beneath. It was not until 11 A.M., after four hours riding, that we at length saw the smoke of the fires rising and heard the shouts in the distance of the natives. As we wished to make a hurried breakfast and our guides wished to push on, a slight difference of opinion arose which ended in our each doing what we wished, for as we dismounted they threw down their small bundles and ungratefully deserted us. It did not matter in the least to us, as we knew perfectly where we were, and knew moreover that we could have reached our present camp at least two hours earlier had we not trusted to our perfidious guides. In another half hour we were on the scene of operations. A huge tract of country was on fire, quite fifteen miles square as we estimated. The fires did not by any means all travel in the same direction, as the surrounding hills and gullies caused eddies of wind, and we soon found we had enough to do to

keep our heads cool and watch the progress and direction of the various conflagrations. The grass averaged about five feet in height, but was in many places as high as eight or ten feet, and it was as dry as tinder, for, for six months no single drop of rain had fallen. The general direction of the wind was east, and after a little observation we soon understood the scheme of the hunt. About three miles from the River Laloki stood a tall sugar-loaf hill, some 500 feet high. This hill could be taken as the centre of a half-circle, the circumference of the half-circle being a loop of the river. At the western foot of the hill, a small scrub of two or three acres in extent was situated, and it was in this scrub where the main slaughter was to take place. The ground was certainly well chosen, for in the existing state of the wind the natives could fire the grass four or five miles away from the hill, and a wall of fire, three miles in width, would then come sweeping along, being controlled by the loop of the river, and taking the direction required till it finally rushed down on the green scrub, where it would find nothing further to feed it. It was obvious that the point we had to make for was this scrub, but we had allowed ourselves to get cut off from it, and our whole attention was occupied in keeping at a respectable distance from the fires. There was a fresh breeze, and in that long dry grass the fire seemed to take huge strides of fifty yards at a time. Our horses too got frightened at the heat, noise, and yelling of the natives,

and every now and then a terrified kangaroo or wild boar would bolt through our midst frightening them still more. We decided that we must force our way through a dense piece of scrub and so come round on the western side of the hill. This we accomplished with much difficulty, and soon we were glad to see we had not mistaken our position, for after half an hour's riding we found ourselves confronted by a strong barricade of nets, which stretched for some hundreds of yards across the narrow pass, into which all game which had not escaped fire and spears would of necessity be driven. Here we found our host Gaeta, who I am bound to say seemed anything but glad to see us, although we were there by his invitation. I had not brought a gun, as I knew that in the confusion that would take place it would be unsafe to use it. We tied up our horses and placed ourselves behind the net, as much out of sight as possible. I had, however, got a revolver which I only intended to use in the event of coming to unpleasantly near quarters with a boar. Gaeta enjoined strict silence, and we could see him stealing stealthily about, spearing here and there one of the advance guard of the flying kangaroos. The fire was by this time about a mile off. The lay of the ground and the bank of the river had consolidated it into a vast wall of flames, and its roar could have been heard miles away. But above the roaring of the flames could be heard the yells of the hundreds of natives, some of whom managed to keep up with

them by running through the green scrub on the river bank, whilst others darted in and out of the grass on its southern flank in a manner no one impeded with clothes could have done. But though we heard plenty of noise, our field of vision was limited to the thirty yards on each side of us, which we could see through the scrub. Gaeta was shivering with excitement and stole about noiselessly, doing, I imagine, a good deal of execution. By the shouts of the natives we could hear from time to time that pigs were breaking cover, but by this time Chalmers and I were debating whether our position would be much longer tenable. We could see the flames approaching, licking the very tips of the trees, but we thought it unlikely that they could reach us, and moreover I knew the natives would not expose their nets to any risk of being burnt. We therefore determined to hold our ground, though it took some trouble to keep the horses in order. But the end was not so exciting as the beginning. The wall of fire swept up to our green scrub and for an instant it seemed as though in another minute it would envelope us; but it had reached the end of its tether and in a few minutes, in the place of what had been a huge conflagration there only remained some tussocks of smouldering grass. Nor were we very fortunate in our position, though no doubt it must have been considered the post of honour, as Gaeta had selected it for himself. There was at no time a dense rush of kangaroos such as one sees sometimes in Australia,

but for all that a heavy slaughter which we could not see was being kept up all along the line of fire Nor could we tell at the conclusion of the day's sport what the total bag was, for each man made off with the portion which had fallen to his share as fast as his legs could take him. I have no doubt, to put it at the lowest estimate, that 500 kangaroos were killed, and perhaps fifteen or twenty pigs. Perhaps the figures might have been double that amount. Such snakes as there were were given a wide berth, as the Motu people are not snake-eaters.

What struck me at first was the apparent want of system displayed in firing the grass. The men seemed to have no controlling spirit amongst them, and each man threw his firestick down wherever it seemed best for him to do so. But there was in reality a well-understood plan, and no doubt each man burnt his piece of grass in precisely the same place as he had done the year before and the year before that. On this particular occasion the river and the scrub controlled the path and the limits of the flames, but it more often happens that the grass is fired in places where there are no natural obstructions to stop the course of the flames for miles. The fire then in course of time burns itself out, and its course cannot be arrested till a river or range of low hills puts an end to it. The number of accidents which occur during these hunts proves that they are no child's play. The hunting season lasts about six weeks, and during that period it generally happens that

some men are killed or seriously wounded. An angry boar can make great havoc, and is not easily killed by excited natives with spears. Snake bite is very common, and horrible burns are the commonest of all. Perhaps during this six weeks the hawks have the best time of all. They follow the track of a fire in hundreds, in search of the bandicoots, rats, and snakes which have perished, and sometimes meet their own fate by being knocked over when they are too gorged to fly.

When the fire reached our point of vantage, there was nothing left for us to do but go home, as the sport for that day was at an end. We were black from head to foot, and had, in consequence, to submit to many feeble jokes made at our expense. As we could not find our guides anywhere, we got home some two hours sooner than we should otherwise have done. We were half disappointed and half pleased with the results of our expedition. For us there had been very little excitement so far as the actual killing of the game was concerned. The only excitement had consisted in our attempts to escape the numerous fires. But no doubt there were many moments of excitement at other places, only they did not happen to come our way. Still, the whole thing was most interesting.

I have written this short account, as I believe it is the only wholesale form of sport the Papuan indulges in, and he looks upon it more as a serious business than as sport. No native could understand

what we mean when we talk of sport. The idea of giving a hunted animal a fair chance for its life, and of observing certain hard and fast rules in the method of killing that animal is looked upon as absurd. I have often been laughed at and looked upon with great contempt on account of my disinclination to pot a bird sitting on the branch of a tree. They can, by no means, understand the excitement of playing a heavy fish on a salmon rod, and think it a foolish form of fishing, because the odds are all in favour of the fish. In pigeon flight shooting, they hate to see the two leading or outside birds fall, because they say, "If you had shot into the middle of the flock, you would have killed eight or ten." No doubt a people who kill their enemies by treachery, and, above all things, love to kill them asleep, could have no very exalted ideas concerning the lower animals. On the whole I came to the conclusion that a big kangaroo drive in Australia, was better fun, and more humane, than a big burning hunt in New Guinea.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONSUL IN THE NEW HEBRIDES.

THE reader may remember that in his letter of August 12, 1888, Hugh Romilly mentioned that a report had reached him from Australia to the effect that he was to be appointed Consul in the New Hebrides, a new post which it had then been decided to establish for the first time. This report, which in course of time assumed the form of newspaper paragraphs, proved to be perfectly well founded, he having in fact been selected early in the year for the appointment by the Foreign Office on the recommendation of the Colonial Office, the Consular service being subject to the former of these two Departments. No official intimation on the subject, however, was received by him till much later, nor, although he was aware that his connection with New Guinea was likely soon to come to an end on the expected proclamation of the Queen's sovereignty over the British portion of that country, did he receive any information as to when that event and the arrival of the future Administrator was likely to take place. I may here quote a passage from a private memo-

randum of his, dated New Hebrides, December 31 1889, to explain the manner in which the information at length reached him, and the difficulties of the position in which he was thereby placed.

So far as I knew no date had been fixed for the formal hoisting of the British flag and the reading of the future Administrator's commission and letters patent. We supposed, judging from former experiences, that there would be a delay of some months, and I considered at all events that I should be advised as to the probable date when I might expect the man-of-war bearing the future Administrator. No such advice, however, was sent me, and about midday of September 4, 1888, H.M.S. *Opal* steamed into the harbour, having on board Dr. Macgregor (now Sir William), and I was informed that he would read his commission and be sworn in by Captain Bosanquet of the *Opal* about 4 P.M.

Captain Bosanquet offered me a passage to Australia, and as he was to sail early on the morning of the 5th I had about fifteen hours in which to make over my office to Dr. Macgregor, and arrange all the details of the ceremony of the 4th. On leaving New Guinea and on arriving at Cooktown I was at a loss as to what was the best course for me to pursue. Though actually still under the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, still I had not corresponded with him for four years, as I had a permission, which was obtained for me from Sir A. Gordon, to communicate direct with the Colonial Department.

For three weeks I was in Australia in this uncertain frame of mind. I had received no official orders of any kind. At length, whilst I was at Bowen on the Queensland coast, I received a telegram from Sir A. Musgrave informing me with authority that I had been appointed H.B.M.'s Consul for the New Hebrides, and that my commission had been despatched to me to Government House, Sydney. On my arrival in Sydney my commission was not there, and after waiting a week I deemed it my duty to go to Fiji, and report myself to the High Commissioner.* I thought it probable that he was expecting me, and also quite possible that he held my commission. When I arrived in Fiji my commission was not there, and my only course was to return to Sydney by the same ship in which I had left it. On my arrival I found the commission waiting for me, and I received it on November 17, 1888.

It was dated June 22, and had apparently been waiting signed some months either in the Foreign or Colonial Office.† I should say here that when I received Sir A. Musgrave's telegram informing me of my appointment to the New Hebrides I sent a telegram to the Secretary of State, a copy of which I cannot at the present moment find. It ran thus, as nearly as I can recollect: "Am I appointed Consul New Hebrides? If so, to whom am I accredited,

* Sir J. B. Thurston, K.C.M.G.

† It was actually despatched from the Foreign Office on the 10th of July.—Ed.

where and how am I to live, what means have I of visiting different parts of district, to whom do I report?" To this I received no answer; and as I have heard since, the reason was because "they did not know how to answer it." But I also heard *unofficially* that my questions were answered in the instructions which had been forwarded to me with my commission. In the covering despatch, however, which accompanied my commission the only instructions I received related to fees, which fees in my then existing state I had no legal power of levying. Nor did the Inland Revenue stamps, by which alone a Consul is allowed to collect fees, reach me till December 27, 1889, on which day I also received telegraphic news of the abolition of the Consulate in the New Hebrides. This despatch is dated July 10, 1888. It was received by me four months and one week later—viz., on November 17, 1888, and the general Consular Instructions were received by me seventeen months and three weeks later—viz., on December 27, 1889. That also is the same day on which I received news of the abolition of the office. The flags, stamp and seal which were advised on the 10th of July, 1888, were received seventeen months after that date—viz., on the 30th of November, 1889. From these facts and dates it can be seen that the natural disadvantages and difficulties in the way of establishing a Consulate in this group are not greater than the artificial official impediments with which the Consul has to contend."

As may be surmised from the passage above quoted, it was without much enthusiasm that Romilly entered upon his duties in the New Hebrides, a country which possessed the unenviable reputation of having about the most unhealthy climate in the Western Pacific. It was discouraging moreover to him to receive his commission without any word of acknowledgment or thanks for his past services, and though doubtless no slight was intended he evidently felt it as such.

Another serious question to be considered was where was the Consul to live. In the New Hebrides themselves there was no house available in which he could have lived in accordance with the traditions of civilised life, and there were strong objections urged by him on the authorities, and admitted by them, against one who held Her Majesty's commission taking lodgings in and flying the British flag over the house of any of the traders, where it was pretty certain that illegal practices—such as selling arms or ammunition and spirits to natives—would constantly prevail, and which he would be utterly powerless to prevent. That would have the appearance of giving an official sanction to lawlessness. The only alternative was to choose the nearest civilised abode to the district, and trust to being able to charter some sort of a ship to visit it in. This accordingly he did, and decided to live at Nouméa in New Caledonia. The effect of this decision, however, though it might be to avoid some of the difficulties was also to create

new ones. The French at that time were feeling very sore and jealous with England on account of her influence in Egypt, and were a good deal excited and annoyed at the creation of the new post of Consul to the New Hebrides, which they seem, however groundlessly, to have supposed might be the prelude to some assertion of ownership by this country over the group which, on account of its proximity to New Caledonia, they were anxious to secure for themselves. Accordingly when Romilly arrived in Nouméa he found himself the object of deep suspicion. This was another intrigue of "Perfide Albion," and the papers openly expressed the opinion that he should be turned out of the country. Unpleasant as the situation was Nouméa remained his headquarters until August, 1889, when he received a despatch telling him to make temporary arrangements for shifting them to Havannah Harbour in the New Hebrides, until the place of his official residence should be definitely fixed. Accordingly he proceeded by the first opportunity—on September 5, 1889—to Havannah Harbour, and there took up his abode at the house of a trader who had previously given him permission to take possession of it whether he happened to be there or not. There he remained for four months, in a most uncomfortable position, accused of playing the spy and listening at keyholes, and having to try to appear to be ignorant of the illegal practices which were daily carried on, but which it was utterly out of his power

to prevent. His stay here was abruptly cut short, much to his relief no doubt, by the unexpected arrival at the end of the year of the despatch announcing the abolition of his office.

This ends the story of the short-lived New Hebrides Consulate. Early in January 1890, Romilly sailed once more for England, and arrived back in London on the 25th of March in that year.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

BUNGALOW, N. G.,
August 21, 1888.

. . . If they think a Consulship in the New Hebrides a good post I suppose I must put up with it, as I should have to do if they offered me a clerkship in the Fiji Custom House, or the post of under-gaoler in a West Indian Island. As you know, during the whole of my time in New Guinea I have been to all intents and purposes Administrator. This is with the exception of the few months that Scratchley spent in the country. For two months after his death I held the commission of Administrator and Special Commissioner. I know nothing of the forms of the Consular service, and I do not like its traditions. Whether rightly or wrongly I cannot say, but it is always looked on by the public as a refuge for the destitute. I know nothing of

the New Hebrides of the present day. When I was there before there were some four or five miserable houses at Havannah Harbour, and a missionary or two dotted about in other parts, and that was all. Do they expect me to camp all alone in the swamps as they did when they sent me to New Britain? If so, I think I must refuse. However, the whole thing depends upon how the offer is made, what the offer means, and whether I think myself capable of doing what is required of me. If it is intended to transfer me for good and all to the Consular service, I am not too old to turn my hand to something else. If they mean to restore me to the Colonial service later on it would be worth thinking about. If I join the Consular service, then all my time is wasted which I have hitherto served both for calculating leave and pension. Of course I cannot criticise their conduct till I know more exactly what it is that I am supposed to be fit for. It is always a question how far a man should allow his pride and prejudice to interfere with his pocket. On your account I feel inclined to put my pride into my empty pocket; on my own account I do not feel by any means inclined to do so. This may be all idle talk, however, as it may be some place after all worth having. You may be sure I shall do nothing without careful thought.

BUNGALOW, NEW GUINEA,
September 3, 1888.

I never thought that I should have to date a letter September from here, but so it is. The mission vessel goes suddenly to Thursday Island to-morrow, hence this letter. I am writing in a perfect Babel of sound, as the trial trip of the yearly trading fleet is taking place. I wish you were here to see it. It is a very pretty sight, and they work and manœuvre well together in spite of the fact that every single man in the fleet is screaming out a different order to his neighbours. I believe that the mission people have all gone to bed and put their heads under the clothes, for on this most sacred day of the year they have no authority, and on board each "lakatoi," or trading canoe, a most outrageously improper dance is being performed by a band of girls. I chaff Chalmers every half hour or so through the telephone which connects our houses. Though we give no official recognition to the proceedings of this day we wink at it. I asked some natives who came up to see me whether they meant to carry out all the traditions of the day in the old manner, and they said, "No, we are afraid of Tamati's (Chalmers') telescope." It is really a betrothal festival, for all the girls dancing will be married immediately on the return of the fleet some four months hence.

Chalmers, who has just returned from Australia, tells me it is supposed that this New Hebrides

appointment means an important post, and that the French Consul-General had told him that they were sending one of their best men there. I cannot for my part conceive how the place can be important, except possibly in the dim future when the Panama Canal becomes a fact. That will not be in my life-time. Another thing which puzzles me is, "Whom shall I be accredited to?" There is no king or supreme chief in the New Hebrides. For Tonga and Samoa it is different. We have treaties with both places. I wait curiously to see what sort of instructions I shall get. I suppose that there are inhabitable houses now, as the French officers must have lived somewhere. At present, as you know by my last letter, I do not feel much elated, but it may be better than appears at first sight. The drought still continues, and is becoming a very serious matter. I shall be glad to see Macgregor again, and I believe they could not have chosen a better man for this place. He will have a hard job before him, and I believe that the first year of his reign will be spent in suppressing turbulent tribes. The natives have fortunately no system of organisation, or we should have been wiped out long ago.

SYDNEY, *October* 22, 1888.

In my last letter from Cooktown I told you that I came across with Bosanquet and waited a fortnight

for my heavy baggage, which after all never reached me till I had been some time in Brisbane. I have still no instructions from home, save a second-hand telegram received in Bowen from Sir A. Musgrave informing me that I had been appointed Consul in New Hebrides. I cabled through him the following message to Lord Knutsford: "Have I any commission as Consul to the New Hebrides? To whom am I accredited? To whom do I report? What means have I of living there? What is the district over which I have control? What means have I of getting about? How am I to separate my duties as Deputy-Commissioner from those of Consul? How am I to obtain the forms, office furniture, and instructions to Consuls? Must have precise instructions as to Consular duties. Await reply." And I am still awaiting the reply. Sir A. Musgrave's sudden death may have something to do with it, but I think not.

I go the day after to-morrow to Fiji to see Thurston and consult with him as to future movements. All this has been immensely expensive to me, and I have now no fund upon which I can draw for travelling expenses and hotel living.

My visit to Brisbane was not a pleasant one; my visit here is still less so. I am hurt at having received no word from the Colonial Office, and it is not much inducement to giving them the best of one's health and work for the future. I suppose they know best.

AT SEA,

November 25, 1888.

You are doubtless wondering where I am. Since I last wrote to you I have been to New Caledonia, Havannah Harbour, Fiji, back to Sydney for a few hours, and now I am near New Caledonia again. I have ascertained that I cannot, however much from a sense of duty I might wish to do so, live in the New Hebrides. There are only a few traders, and I cannot live with them for sufficient reasons. I am therefore going for some time to live in Nouméa (N. C.). I intend to charter a schooner there at my own risk for a cruise in the Islands. A man cannot perform impossibilities. I cannot *swim* round my district. I shall have the benefit of Layard's* advice also by this plan. From a political point of view I think it hardly advisable to make New Caledonia the base for working the New Hebrides. They will think me a spy, *mais que faire?* I feel sure that the Foreign Office will peremptorily order me out of it, and so my first step, through no fault of my own, will have been a mistake. Of course I went to Fiji in search of instructions and found none. On my return to Sydney I found my commission, not a word from the Colonial Office thanking me for past services. . . . Nouméa is not a bad little place, but,

* Edgar Leopold Layard, Esq., C.M.G., H.B.M.'s Consul in New Caledonia, and a brother of Sir H. S. Layard.—ED.

of course, it is only a vast prison, so the society consists chiefly of naval, military, and civil officials.

I am really at a loss to know what address to give you. I suppose New Hebrides will find me somehow. I seem to be going back to the old days when I could never be found. One advantage I have gained is that I have no official superiors in this part of the world, and am therefore my own master.

AT SEA,

November 25, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—I am writing under difficulties, as the ship is knocking about in the most infernal manner. You must think me very rude for not having written to you for so long, but, in fact, I have been at sea almost continually for the last five weeks, going from place to place, hunting for the instructions which the Foreign Office did not send. An old *fool* sent my parcels on, one from you and one from my mother, to the Messageries Office in Nouméa, and I was actually there for two days a month ago without knowing anything about it; however, I shall get them to-morrow. You could not have chosen any books I like better than Thackeray's. I have spent the last three days in reading "Vanity Fair," for about the tenth time. As for me, I don't know what I am going to do, or what I can do.

I believe my new book is considered too improper to be published, at least so S. says. My mother says she would not have found it out herself, but that she supposes it must be so, since S. says so. Perhaps, under the circumstances, a jury of matrons had better be appointed to deal with the question.

November 26th.—Nouméa. No letters here from any one, so good-bye.

NOUMÉA, NEW CALEDONIA,
December 17, 1888.

MY DEAR M.,—Your letters come dropping in in a strange way, and it is always a great pleasure to me to receive them. I have got one now of July 31. It has had a severe chase after me, and only just caught me, as I sail to-morrow for the New Hebrides. I am always in some *new* place—Guinea, Britain, Ireland, Caledonia, or Hebrides—and the chance of getting back to the old countries of those names seems very remote. You ask me why I accepted the place: simply because I could not refuse. I have no money of my own, and, though the life is damnable and demoralising, I must say that the salary for a man of my standing in the service is not bad.

Then there *is* some chance of distinction in this new post, because it is an open secret that the French mean to grab the Islands if they can. We, of course, can't allow that on account of Australia,

and if I can manage to keep things going smoothly, perhaps the F. O. may be pleased. However I won't go through what I have gone before, because my health won't stand it. On account of the impossibility of residing there, as there is no house for me, I have to make this my headquarters; but for a fortnight in each month I can make a tour in a small inter-insular steamer.

I detest this place. There is not a decent Frenchman in it. They have invited me to their club, but as it seems to me, only for the purpose of being studiously rude. The Governor has taken no notice of my call, and, in fact, the whole situation is unpleasant.

I should much enjoy being at home in order to gratify H.'s taste for champagne and the drama; but, as it is out of my power, the only alternative is for you both to migrate to these parts, where the wildest dissipation is the convict band three days a week. The gentleman who conducts it was formerly a wealthy physician in Paris. He found out one morning that he had a rival in the affections of his wife, and so, being a doctor and understanding anatomy, he lay in wait for that rival, and amputated his head close to the shoulders. This seems to have finished the rival. But besides being a doctor he was something of an epicure, and a man who loved to give little dinners; so he invited all his wife's relations to a feast, and he secretly cooked that rival's head, and, towards the middle of the

meal, his wife and his rival's head were suddenly introduced to each other. But this did not satisfy him. Before the police could arrive, he found time to amputate his wife's head also, and, as the story goes, he derived much pleasure from the *coup de théâtre* he produced when he was able to offer the two heads on a charger to the officers of the law. Now he leads the band in Nouméa.

This is a nasty little anecdote, but strictly true.

. . . . [TO HIS MOTHER.]

NOUMÉA, NEW CALEDONIA,
December 17, 1888.

In reading your letters over I see that you had begun to suspect what actually occurred—viz., that I was gazetted to the New Hebrides without a word on the subject ever having been spoken to me. To my telegram, of which I sent you a copy, no reply was made; it was simply acknowledged. After my expensive and useless round to Fiji and back, I found my commission at Government House, Sydney, without a single word about previous services. According to my ideas of the courtesy of the service, something should have been said on my leaving New Guinea. They must know quite well—indeed Douglas told them so repeatedly—that I kept everything together there single-handed. Even though

official compliments mean nothing, still a man who risks his life and his health, and loses the greater part of his property in the service, likes to know if his conduct has been approved of. I cannot be expected to go to my new post with any very great enthusiasm, whilst I am in ignorance as to whether I did well or badly in my last.

Possibly they may say "he expects too much for his length of time in the service;" but I consider that I have had three distinct promises made me: one in Scratchley's commission, another in Douglas's, and a third in a letter from the Colonial Office in reply to my application for advancement.

My great, and indeed my only friend here, is a Count Lakerstein, the Italian Consul. He helps me with my work, and is a mine of information on every subject. Our friendship began on common grounds. He hates every one in the town but me, and I hate every one in the town but him. He sketches admirably, and I hope to send you home a caricature of P. and myself, promenading the New Hebrides. I have a nice little house out of the town where I can keep to myself. My landlady is English, everything very nice, clean, and in good taste. We send native boys out in the morning to market, and they enjoy the fun of making good bargains. If it were not for the jealousy of the French, I could be very comfortable here.

PORT SANDWICH, NEW HEBRIDES,
December 27, 1888.

. . . . New Caledonia, where I have my head-quarters, is a strange place, inhabited by fifth-rate Frenchmen. I have had bad luck with my servants. I lost my faithful Charles, and the other men were by no means a success. The last one went mad, and, after trying to kill my landlady, tried to kill himself. We have just celebrated Christmas, and Christmas in the New Hebrides is a fearful and wonderful sight. Thank God it only comes once a year. The French and English had a pitched battle, but luckily they were all too drunk to shoot straight. I wonder why they should think at home that I can only get on with savages. I wish they would give up that idea. I go back to New Caledonia in a day or two, and probably stay there for a month or two. I don't mean to stay here during the rainy season for all the F. O.'s in the world. This is the worst and most unhealthy place I have been in as yet.

NOUMÉA, NEW CALEDONIA,
January 16, 1889.

Life goes on very much on its same old grooves with me. As you will have heard from other sources, I have spent three weeks in the New

Hebrides, and have assured myself that at present there is no means of my living there. In the meantime my position in this French country is a very unpleasant one. The French regard me as a spy, and so I am, but not an officially recognised one. But the new governor, Noel Pardon, who arrived three days ago, on his reception, treated the English with marked courtesy, while he almost ignored the Germans and Italians. I cannot help thinking, on the strength of these things, and taking into account the cordial relations of the French and English mixed Naval Commission* in the New Hebrides, and the offensive operations which we have carried out in each other's company, that some immediate friendly international step is about to be put in execution for the protection of the unappropriated islands in the Pacific.

. . . .

NOUMÉA,

February 15, 1889.

. . . . Things are coming to a climax as to my appointment in the Hebrides. The Governor here says that the English Government have committed a breach of faith, and has telegraphed strongly to France. I have telegraphed to Lord Salisbury, and

* A joint Commission, consisting of British and French naval officers, had been appointed to protect the lives and property of British and French subjects and to maintain order.—ED.

in the meantime I have appointed a Vice-Consul who lives in the group. I expect the *Tanais* in to-morrow, by which I think I *must* get letters, so till then I will close this.

February 19th.—The *Tanais* is in with no letters. I am thinking of going to Fiji to talk my affairs over with Thurston. I might just as well wait there as here, and though Fiji is not a very pleasant place, still it is more agreeable than Nouméa. I shall be very glad when the next month is over, and the men-of-war begin to get about again. There is an utter stagnation at present everywhere.

FIJI,
May 22, 1889.

MY DEAR M.,—I am feeling somewhat depressed at my utter inability to do my work properly, and the indifference shown by the Home Government. I am seriously thinking of buying a *tent* and pitching it somewhere in the group. It will be a most undignified proceeding, but I don't see what else is to be done.

We have been having nothing but misfortunes in the New Hebrides—two fine steamers wrecked, and some sailing ships. I certainly never saw five months of such persistent hurricanes and gales before. Coming home seems further off than ever for me. They certainly might recall me on the grounds that

I have not been living within my jurisdiction, but I think under the circumstances they can hardly do that.

I go back to that wretched Nouméa to-morrow. Certainly this place is not very lively, but it is better than a fifth-rate French country. We all feel rather proud out here of our English sailors, and their conduct during the Samoan hurricane. While three German and three American men-of-war got wrecked, Kane of the *Calliope* was the only man with skill and pluck enough to take his ship out to sea in the teeth of it. He received the most tremendous reception a man ever got on his return to Sydney.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

FIJI, *May* 22, 1889.

I told you in my last that I had come here for several reasons, but principally to enable me to take a passage to the New Hebrides in the *Welcome Home*. She has been condemned as unseaworthy, and so I am now returning once more to Nouméa. Another steamer on which I had counted for going about in has been wrecked on Tanna in the New Hebrides. Everything lost except lives. The natives were very threatening, and the white women had a narrow shave. I hope perhaps to get a cruise in the *Lizard;* it is a pity she does not belong to A. now. I really don't know what has come over this

part of the world. We still have gales of wind, and no fine weather. I am in for another crowded ship to-morrow, as we take the wrecked officers and crew back.

HAVANNAH HARBOUR, NEW HEBRIDES,
ON BOARD H.M.S. *Lizard*,
June 2.

Have had no chance of sending this before. I am just off now in the *Opal* with Bosanquet for a northern cruise. The *Lizard* goes off to Fiji to-day with a murderer for trial on board. Have only a minute, so must say good-bye.

H.M.S. *Opal*,
PORT HAVANNAH, NEW HEBRIDES,
June 12, 1889.

You will have learned by my last two letters that I went to Fiji in search of a *Welcome Home*, but found that *Welcome* condemned by the Port officers. I only stayed two days in Nouméa on my return, as I found the *Lizard* there ready for sea. I have now been ten days on board this ship. We have been cruising about with the French ship *Saône*, doing some mixed commission business.

If you know any author in search of a plot for a shilling shocker, here is a recent experience of ours. We were waiting in Port Sandwich, Malucolo, for

the arrival of the Frenchman, when news came over from the Island of Ambrym that a Corsican named Fumaroli had been clubbed to death. Also that Lebel, another Corsican, had been poisoned some two months previously by a third Corsican named Rossi. This sounded interesting, so off we went to pick up news. We found that the story was substantially correct, and that, true to his traditions, the amiable Rossi had declared a vendetta against his two neighbours, the subject of dispute being the price of cocoa-nuts. Lebel was his first victim. Him he poisoned slowly with arsenic, and whilst the process was going on he wrote him daily letters, beginning "Ami de mon cœur," &c., asking him to dinner. But he showed his hand when Lebel was dying, by standing over his bed and taunting him. He disposed of Mr. Fumaroli by paying some natives to club him with the stocks of rifles. When we arrived at this place, what struck us particularly was the fact that the beach was covered with huge mounds of cocoa-nuts. He accounted for this by saying that they had come down in the ordinary course of trade, a statement which we did not believe. It turned out two days afterwards that actually while we were there an ambush of natives was formed to shoot him while he was trading for the nuts, but on our arrival they all ran away. Lebel was dug up, and arsenic was found in him. These are the outlines of the story, and I have no doubt that you will think it a cheerful tale of professional rivalry in the New Hebrides. We leave

in three days for Tanna, to inspect the wreck of the steamer *Fijian*, and then back to Nouméa. There I hope to be transhipped to the *Lizard*, or return again in this ship.

I hope that I brought matters to a point the other day with respect to my appointment, and the opinion entertained of it by the Frenchmen. I called officially on the French captain, and was received officially. Not being a saluting ship he could not salute, but he gave me a guard, and officially returned my visit. The *Opal* saluted me on my return, and then the French captain very politely told me that he had orders to regard me as A British Consul, but not THE Consul for the New Hebrides. I was equally polite, and suggested that he had already done so, but that he would not admit. We parted on perfectly good terms, but I am wiring the interview home, as it should bring matters to a climax. I hear that there is a chance of a French officer being appointed to act with us in settling land claims. That might possibly explain my *raison d'être*.

I am afraid that this is a stupid, dull letter, but if I hear from you to-morrow I will add more. I think this time of year is fairly healthy; at all events, we have had no cases of fever so far. It is infinitely pleasanter cruising about with a lot of good fellows than being stuck in that wretched Nouméa. I hate the idea of going back to it.

June 13th.—We sail the day after to-morrow for Nouméa. No mail yet. Interrupted by traders.

NOUMÉA, *July* 11, 1889.

MY DEAR M.,—You say you don't think New Caledonia sounds likely to be a place to get fat in. I'm not so sure, all the Frenchmen are fat, but they drink absinthe, and we don't. You suggest a little book about convicts' doings in New Caledonia. It would not be interesting. There are very few political prisoners. The penitentiary is most interesting; but I was only allowed to go over it on a promise to write nothing about it. As you seem to take an interest in it, however, I send you an account in a local journal of an execution, in which there is nothing nasty, except the last paragraph but one, and I advise you to skip that.

The French are making great preparations here for their fête, the 14th of July, on which the Bastille fell. Foreign Consuls are in a great stew as to whether they should lend it the countenance of their august patronage. It does not affect me, as I hold no official position here. All the batteries saluted on the Queen's Coronation and Accession days, so I don't see why we should be too squeamish to attend a Republican fête. We are to have races, reviews, climbing greasy poles, balls, &c. &c. I am now waiting for the arrival of the *Calliope*, to take a passage in that famous ship to the Hebrides.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

NOUMÉA, *August* 20, 1889.

You certainly deserve a long letter as you were done out of the last mail, but by no fault of mine. I was on a driving tour, under the auspices of the Minister of the Interior, far away in the bush. But when the day came to write, in comes the *Courier* saying that the floods had carried away all the bridges, and that in consequence there could be no mail even by horseback. However, the telegraph posts still stood, and I sent two telegrams to my agent telling him to send the one for you by post. Like an ass I sent it in English, and the result was that the requisite number of words was there, but the sense had been lost in the floods. If my agent has not torn it up I will send it to you to show you a specimen of French English. I also enclose a pretty little attack on me in the Government journal, as I think it may amuse you. Though the facts are incorrect, it shows the temper of a certain section of the French public. I believe that there is to be an answer to it to-night, and if I get it in time I will send that too.

In the meantime I have had a very interesting time in the bush. We were allowed to visit the Camp Brun, about a hundred miles from here, where the worst class of convicts are confined. The discipline there reminds one of the stories of Norfolk

Island of old. Yesterday I visited the hospital and convict lunatic asylum at Isle Nou, where the great penitentiary is. In the hospital hardly any medicines are given, but all cases are undertaken by mesmerism. For instance, we saw a man who had been stone blind for five years. He was put into a mesmeric trance, and in that state was told that when he woke up he would be able to see. And when he woke up he could see, though, of course, not very well. I have always believed in mesmerism, but I never saw it used for curative purposes before.

Life here goes on pretty evenly. I am in communication with the Foreign Office about building a house in the Hebrides. I decided not to apply for a passage in the *Calliope*, as it would have given great offence to the French Government, and it is not worth while doing that. If I stay here long I mean to give up my rooms in Nouméa, and live about fifty miles out in the bush. It is cheaper, pleasanter, and I should have equal facilities for doing my work.

I suppose you will think that I cannot live on good terms with any one, but these things are forced upon me, and I am the one who regrets them the most. I think I may describe what I mean by a little incident that happened in the bush the other day at a place called St. Vincent. We were a mixed company of French and English at dinner, and I as "M. le Consul"—as the French custom goes—was asked to take the head of the table. All

of a sudden towards the end of dinner a Frenchman cried out, "Je porte un toast!" and then followed a grossly insulting and disgusting speech against the Queen. I must say for the Frenchmen that not one of them drunk the toast, but all the Englishmen who had understood what had been said were on their feet in a moment. However I got them to sit down, and told the man (who was a high French official) that he must immediately retract his words, and apologise to the company at table. To which he said, "Mais, Monsieur, vous vous fachez un peu facilement." The Frenchmen were just as angry as the Englishmen, but on our side and not on his. I replied, "Monsieur, je ne me fache pas facilement, mais quand je me fache je me fache sérieusement." Of course he had to apologise and retract, and now he is another enemy of mine, but I think you will admit that one cannot pass over these things.

I am sorry that I have not yet seen my book. Some day perhaps I may get it. Many people have asked me the name of it, but even that I do not know.

EFATÉ, NEW HEBRIDES,

September 30, 1889.

MY DEAR M.,—I have had no letters from any one for ever so long. But what I find strange is that my uninteresting "officials" manage to reach me, printed notices to mariners and such like documents, while my private letters go to British Guiana and

God knows where else besides. I also write lots of letters home, which I believe never get there.

I used to think that New Guinea was bad enough as far as amusements were concerned, but here there are absolutely none at all. There is not even a soul to speak to in a rational manner. There are some traders who are interested in the fluctuations of the native produce market, but whose conversation on topics of general interest is not instructive. My secretary is always down with fever, and therefore sick and sorry for himself. To show you how out of the world I am, I am told that somewhere about the beginning of the year a book of mine was published. I have not only never seen a copy of it, but I have not yet been told what the name of the book is. As for me, it takes me whatever strength of mind I possess to make me do the work I have to do. We have no one here who can cook, but that does not affect me much, as I live principally on potatoes and ships' biscuits. What I object to principally are my surroundings, the sort of persons I have to associate with daily on equal terms. However, I don't mean to bore you with a list of grievances, so I'll turn to a more cheerful subject. The Thackeray books which you sent me out have been a source of the greatest pleasure to me, and to other people as well.

October 2nd.—The mail has come in, an hour before her advertised time, and goes again immediately. I have so many sudden returns to send that I cannot finish this letter as I should like to do.

[TO HIS MOTHER.]

EFATÉ, PORT HAVANNAH, NEW HEBRIDES,

October 1, 1889.

I wonder if you have been puzzling as to what has become of me for the last month. I do not know if there are any more unpleasant places in the world than the New Hebrides. If there are, I suppose I shall be sent to them some day. I am living in the house of a trader. You know that I have refused to do this for a year past, and both Foreign Office and Colonial Office have considered my objections just and dignified. A month ago I found myself in this extraordinary position. They had admitted previously that to live either on a missionary's charity or to put myself under an obligation, and practically to tie my own hands by boarding with a trader was impossible, because we never know the moment when I may have to object to the proceedings of one or the other of those two classes of men. Accordingly the Foreign Office wrote to me directing me to furnish estimates, specifications and plans of a Consulate in the Group. These were furnished by me some six weeks ago. Almost on the same day that these papers were despatched came an official from the High Commissioner directing me by order of the Colonial Office to charge my salary with those expenses which I incurred from what appears to have been a false sense of duty, in hunting all over Australia and the Pacific for my commission. I also

received in the same communication what I took to be a pretty strong hint that unless I found myself installed in the New Hebrides by the first opportunity, probably supplies would be stopped. So now you see the position.

Up to the present time I have received no "General Consular Instructions." It is true that they have sent me a very mild censure for not complying with certain regulations of which I never heard or dreamed in my life. They write to me telling me that I can only collect fees by means of the "stamps with which they supply me," and insist on returns being at once sent in. An enclosure to this dispatch is a fee stamp book, but they take no notice of the fact that I have not yet received from them any of the stamps, seals, or flags which they tell me they expect me to use. I have pointed out, in language which I am afraid they may think too plain, that whilst I have obeyed what I take to be a direct order to live here, I have not been supplied with the means of legalising any action of mine, and that therefore I mean to take no action of any sort whatever. In a private letter to the High Commissioner some time ago, I used, so far as I can remember, the words, "I personally have no objection to living with a trader like ——. He is rough, but a good fellow at the bottom. But if I have no personal pride in these matters, I have plenty of official pride, and my office and myself, through my office, would be made, and, as I consider, justly made, a

laughing stock of by the French." It has already been proved that I was right. One captain of a French man-of-war has told me that his Government cannot recognise me as British Consul. Of course he was civil, and I was equally civil in telling him that so long as I hold the Queen's commission, I expected that commission to be respected; but I reminded him that we met in a country which no more belonged to France than it did to England (a point the French never like to concede), and his acceptance or non-acceptance of my commission could only affect us personally, and, in the present state of affairs, could have no official significance. Well, four days ago, in he comes, "Capitaine de Frégate, M. de B.," of the *Saône*. We are, personally, good friends enough, and sit down together at the tables of the Nouméa cafés, and all his officers are good fellows to, but for the forty hours he stayed here we never saw each other.

The dirt and filth of this place are wonderful. I don't complain of the food; at all events we have fresh milk with our tea. I have three rooms out of the five on the first floor, the patriarchal —— has the fourth, whilst the fifth is occupied by about three of those female belongings indispensable to a true patriarch.

I never go into the store or liquor-bar below, as I do not wish to see my host's barman selling grog to the natives. It is illegal, and therefore I wish to know nothing about it. A nice way, you will say,

of doing one's duty, but you must blame my superiors for the position I am in. However, I have written quite enough about this country.

What can I tell you of any sort of interest? The watch you gave me on my birthday in 1883 had a narrow shave of bidding me a final adieu the other day. A ship was in, and the captain was smoking a pipe with me after dinner. About 10 o'clock his coxswain came up to tell him that his boat was manned. The captain, however, had twelve miles to pull to his ship, and decided to start at daybreak. We get up in this country at daybreak, and I was up with the rest to go for our morning swim. M. le coxswain at that early hour was so drunk that he could not stand. "Duck him," says the captain, and ducked he accordingly was. I interceded for his pea-jacket however, as it is rather a shame to make a man go twelve miles in the early morning without a single piece of dry clothing. It was fortunate I did so, though my motives at the time were philanthropic and not personal. At 6 A.M. we had our cup of tea and biscuit, as we keep French hours, and at 6.15 I went to wind up my watch, with the same punctuality that Mr. Shandy used to wind up his clock. But no watch was to be seen. As a watch is not a thing which any native about our rooms would steal, I did not care to make —— uncomfortable by telling him about my loss, but preferred to puzzle it out for myself. In about half an hour, when we were all dressed, and had met in my room

prior to saying good-bye, the captain, who owed —— some ten shillings or so for entertainment for himself and boat's crew, said that he was sorry, but in the course of the night his solitary coin—a pound—had been abstracted. "Why, I can't find my watch," says ——. "Nor I either," says my secretary. "Nor I either," says I—the watch you wot of. Well, to cut a long and not very interesting story short, I searched the boat, and eventually found the three watches and chains in the pocket of the coat which I had saved from a ducking. There were also belonging to me—item, two sticks of tobacco; item, an inch and a half of cedar pencil; item, a half-smoked cigarette. Is this story very stupid? Probably you will think so; but what on earth can I write about. Perhaps you are surprised to hear that I have a secretary. I pay for him myself, but he is well worth the money.

PORT HAVANNAH, N. H.,

October 21, 1889.

I write to you by sailing ship which leaves here to-morrow for Nouméa. It should be a little quicker than waiting ten days for the mail. I returned yesterday from a fortnight's cruise to the Northern Islands in a trading ship. It is the last time I shall travel in these islands in any other sort of ship but a man-of-war. I don't mean to inflict a list of dis-

comforts on you. Please imagine the worst you can, and then multiply by any figure you think large enough. I find this place intensely disgusting—I mean the whole group. In former years the natives were good savages enough, and had, even when I first made their acquaintance, some points worth study. Now, they have discarded all their original good traits as natives, and have retained all the bad ones, and they have added the very worst white vices. The result is an animal far worse than the worst natural savage. There are a few white men who are even lower than the natives. The missionaries nearly all trade, and will cheat and drive as hard a bargain as my worthy landlord himself could do. They are a curious mixture of the sanctimonious Scotch Presbyterian with an admixture of colonial cunning and "cuteness." I am fortunate in having at this place an exception to the rule—one M'Donald, a rough, bluff Australian Scotchman. His work has been very good in results, and the natives who come under his influence are all of them good reliable men. Curiously enough, he began life professionally as a Jew lawyer's clerk—not good material, you would suppose, from which to recruit missionaries.

To turn to other subjects. As I tell you in every letter, I have not yet seen my book, though it has been out some time now. I saw in the papers that ——, in a speech before the Queensland Geographical, objected to some of my remarks in it. But I do not mind his criticisms, as he gravely

reproves me for my remarks on Lawson's "New Guinea," and blames me for putting any credence in such an unreliable work as that. He is a characteristic Scotchman, without any sense of humour. Of course any one who had read Lawson's "New Guinea," together with my praise of that work, would see that I was quite aware of the fact that from beginning to end it is a very clever but most stupendous lie.

PORT HAVANNAH,

October 28, 1889.

About a year ago you expressed the unchristian wish that some postmaster somewhere should be slowly tortured to death. The doom of the Cooktown official has gone forth, and, if I can manage it, he shall die. To-day no less than sixty-eight letters reached me, eight from you, seven from M., seven from C., and others from all sorts of people. Some are fifteen months old. This is a little too much, don't you think so? and I have not got them all yet.

Did I ever tell you I suspected a system of espionage in Nouméa? I have proved that many of my letters are opened and detained in the Nouméa Post Office. I send you a letter of W's. on the subject. Democratic France meets Imperial Russia half-way in this sort of dishonesty. But I laugh to myself to

men largely interested in the Chartered Company, who formed themselves for this purpose into a small independent company, under the title of the "Northumberland Mining Syndicate, Limited." My brother was offered the command of their expedition, and, as it only involved an absence of not more than twelve months from England, and would not therefore interfere with his other prospects, he gladly accepted.

After some weeks spent in preparations and in acquiring what knowledge he could of South African travel (which was quite new to him), he sailed from Plymouth for the Cape on the 17th of April, 1891. In spite of severe losses among the horses and oxen, and numerous difficulties being overcome, the object of the expedition was attained at last, by securing for the Syndicate various claims and properties, one of which, The Dickens' Reef, is now being worked with every prospect of giving most satisfactory dividends to the shareholders.

About the end of the year, after the rainy season had set in, Romilly was recalled by his directors to report and consult with them as to the purchase of The Dickens' Reef, and arrived back in London on the 16th of January, 1892, six months only before his death.

His letters home from South Africa speak for themselves and need no comment. It is unfortunate that a good many of them have disappeared; those therefore which I have been able to collect, and which

are here given, afford but a very imperfect record of the expedition. Such as they are, however, I give them, as any memoir of my brother's life would be incomplete without some reference to his doings in Mashonaland.

VRYBURG,

June 7, 1891.

I have been out all day taking my waggons (nine of them and three carts) across a thing called a Vley (pronounced "flay"). The place is a muddy, swampy bog, and I had to put thirty-six bullocks on to each waggon to get it across. However, we are on the right side now, and have no great difficulty for five hundred miles. I am becoming quite a Dutch scholar. I trek in my veldtschoon to inspan and trek across the vley or sproot every morning; and I can now insult a Boer in his own language wherever I meet him in the Veldt. My plans are these: I drive a cart from here to Mafeking, 120 miles, in two days. Then I go by post-cart to Tuli, five hundred miles on, night and day. No sleep; you may imagine how I shall like it; then by mule-waggon to Fort Salisbury, another five hundred miles. I shall go through from here in three weeks, and, while I am on the road, shall have no sleep at all. I shall be reduced to a shadow.

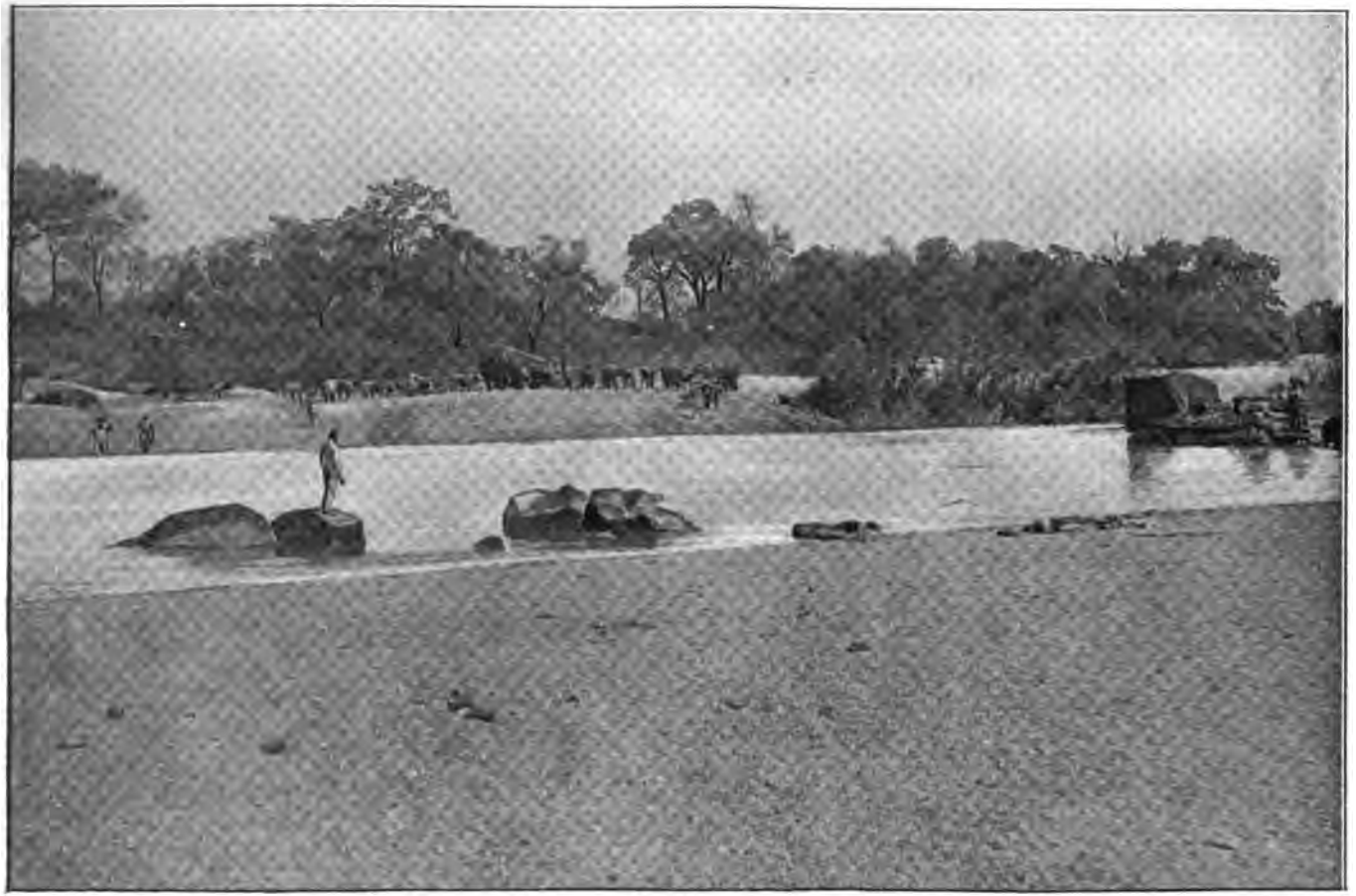
Everything is going well. I like my young fellows immensely. Flower is a great acquisition. I

never saw such a place as this. The Dutch hate us, and nearly killed one of my party the other night in the street. They set on him like a lot of jackalls. I think that the big Boer trek is what President Krüger calls "damped off." I am glad of it. We have all turned into soldiers of the Chartered Company now. Every one is swearing by us, and laughing at ——. We are certainly the best found party that has started. We have now nine waggons, three carts, one hundred and eighty-six cattle, eighty-two donkeys, thirty-two horses, fourteen dogs, eighteen white men, thirty Kaffirs, and a tame antelope. We carry up nearly forty tons of weight, and we have nearly all of us spent all our money.

PALAPYE, KHAMA'S COUNTRY.

July 7, 1891.

I am writing now from the capital of the most powerful chief in South Africa—Khama—of whom you have probably never heard. He is Lo Bengula's great enemy. So far I have come 450 miles from Vryburg, our starting-place, and I am staying here for a day to rest my horses. I am still 150 miles away from Tuli, which is my real starting-point into Mashonaland, but I hope that five days' travelling will take me there. So far the work has been monotonous. I generally shoot some guinea-fowl every day, which helps out the provisions.



From a photograph by Dr. M. Johnston

BULLOCK WAGGONS CROSSING A DRIFT

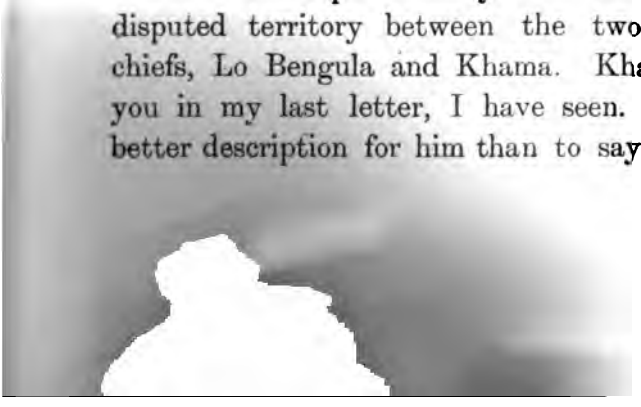
To face p. 370



My day here is not rest for me—only for the horses. I am just off to see his black Royal Highness. I am afraid he will make me squat in a painful and ridiculous attitude for half an hour before he condescends to speak to me. My most valuable possession was stolen two days ago—viz., my sponge. I am pretty dirty now, but I shall be a good bit worse soon. Prospects are all looking bright—plenty of gold, and no trouble with Dutch or Matabele.

MACLOUTSIE CAMP,
DEBATEABLE LAND,
July 11, 1891.

. . . . I arrived here, as I told you, this morning with my horse tired out. I have only 60 miles left to do to Tuli, but I *must* rest my horses here a day and a half. We have driven now 600 miles from Vryburg with the same four horses, and our average daily work is 27½ miles. That is considered good work, but I paid £200 for the horses, and if I get them to Fort Salisbury, 500 miles on, they will be worth £600. Do these figures interest you? You are a shareholder, and so they should. I am on the border of a strip of country 60 miles wide, which is disputed territory between the two great rival chiefs, Lo Bengula and Khama. Khama, as I told you in my last letter, I have seen. There is no better description for him than to say that he is a



gentleman in the highest sense of the word. He is not so d——d black—not so black as your hat—and I am sure he is all white inside. I think that all dangers from Boer treks, Portuguese, and Matabele raids are over. The Boer climax was reached only a few days ago, and this will show you how near we have been to a second Boer war. I do not think, either, that it will ever appear in the London telegrams. You must know that ever since the Boer trek started, the Border and South African Police have been guarding the drifts over the Limpopo or Crocodile River. The young Boers heard of the fine farming country in Mashona and Manicaland, and in spite of all protest from their elders and the President of the Transvaal, they said they recognised no private company rights, and intended to settle where they pleased. For weeks past they have been massing along the Transvaal side of the Crocodile, and the matter was brought to an issue a few days ago, at a place about 30 miles from here, called Baine's Drift. At that place there were about 40 South African Company police. Twenty-five waggons and about 100 armed Boers appeared on the other side, and under a flag of truce four were allowed to cross. On the Protectorate side they held an angry discussion with Lieut. Hicks-Beach, and asserted their right and intention to cross the river. Hicks-Beach required them either to sign the necessary terms of obedience to the Company's rules, or to show passes from their President or from an officer of the

Chartered Company. Of course they could show no passports They refused obedience to the Company, and retired to their side of the river, asserting their intention to force the crossing. Beach replied by forming his men under cover to guard the drift, and by promising them that the moment they attempted to cross he would fire on them. The only result was frantic abuse; and ever since they have seen that we mean business the great Boer trek is evaporating back into the Transvaal. The Dutch know very well that a war with us now means the loss of the Transvaal to them, and they have not "red-coat soldiers," as they call them, to deal with this time, but men who can ride and shoot even better than themselves. Some have now given in their adherence to the Company, and have come across. Have I bored you with South African politics? It was touch and go, however, and how I cursed my tired horses when I heard the Baine's Drift news at Notwane Junction. I think that everything is quiet, for this year at least.

One meets strange people in this country. There are several policemen in this camp who do not bear the same names that they did when I knew them at Oxford.

You ask me to tell you my route. That is rather difficult, but, roughly speaking, I have followed the Transvaal boundary as far as this place. I hardly know myself what my road will be north of Tuli. You wonder who washes my clothes. Well! I

rather wonder the same thing. As a matter of fact, they don't get washed at all.

FORT TULI, MASHONALAND,

July 15, 1891.

I have joined Beit's party here, and, as you know, we are really the executive of the Chartered Company We ought to have been a week at Fort Salisbury when you get this letter. The people here are very hospitable, and gave us a big dinner and concert last night. Lord Randolph made a speech. He says he thinks our machine good enough to crush chocolate creams on the boulevards with!

We hope to visit the Zimbabwe ruins in about a week. I have had very little sport so far, but I generally shoot guinea-fowl and pheasants every day. I shall probably be with Beit for the next two months, and as he will be constantly telegraphing I think you may take his movements to be identical with mine. I think our prospects are very rosy, and I see an endless source of profit in our machine. People are going east into Manicaland, and I have no doubt that we shall follow the crowd. The box on which I am writing is wanted, so I must stop.

ON THE ROAD, 53 MILES FROM TULI,

July 19, 1891.

A scrappy line to say "All well so far." We are now fairly in the game country, and last night for the first time I heard lions roaring round our camp, wolves and jackalls also. The kind of shrieking howl which is called a lion's roar, produces a curious feeling at night, not fear certainly, but indescribable. Our point from here is Fort Victoria, and 121 miles short of that are the Zimbabwe ruins, which we mean to visit. After that we have a 300 mile pull through sand, and then at Fort Salisbury we reach our *starting point*, after a 1000 mile drive. This is the best I can do on the road. The waggon which takes this is going.

FORT TULI,

August 15, 1891.

I have been up the road 200 miles as far as Fort Victoria, and have now come back to meet the waggons. Our troubles have begun, but we are not worse off than other people; indeed, I think we are doing better than most. I have lost all the horses I took up from sickness, but I still have two which I met on the road back with Flower and the Scotch carts. I brought them back here to save their lives. It is a miserable thing to see the horses and mules dying.

FORT SALISBURY,

October 8, 1891.

. . . . This wearisome journey is not at an end yet, as I have to go back 200 miles to Victoria, where I have stopped the waggons on account of very good reports of gold finds there. We shall make our summer quarters there. As for our prospects they are as good or better than other people's. The expense of travelling has been about three times what was estimated. Our loss in cattle is enormous. Out of all our horses but one remains, and he is with me here. He caught the "sickness," and lived whilst the others died. . . .

VICTORIA,

November 4, 1891.

I think our prospects are good enough now. This place is turning out to be *the* gold-field after all, not Salisbury, or Manica, Mazoe, Lomagundis, Hartley Hill, or any of the other much-spoken-of places. We are busy building our summer camp, as we expect the rains daily. It is very hard work, but every one works with a will. We have three reefs pegged out, one close to this place. They all look well. A good many rich discoveries are being made all about, and altogether prospects are looking up. I have had but little time for shooting, but I

was in at the death of a lion the other day. One of our men came across him one night while he was looking for cattle, and gave him a shot. As it was thick bush and getting dark, he did not dare do anything more that night, but he came into camp and said he thought he had hit him. Accordingly, next morning, Grey, Crawley, and I went out, and after a long beat through thick undergrowth and ant-hills, we sighted him, and followed the dogs as hard as we could. We came on the place where he had been lying all night, and found some blood there, which showed us he was wounded, and in consequence savage. The dogs took up the scent from here again, and we had a hard run of three minutes after them, until we found ourselves standing round an ant-hill covered with thick bush, with the lion roaring inside. We none of us could see him, though none of us were more than eight yards off. At last Grey got a snap-shot and hit him in the head, killing him at once. It was very exciting work, as nobody could have had time for more than one shot, and we expected the brute out on the top of us every second. We know of three more lions about here, so perhaps we shall have some more fun soon.

So far the climate of this country is everything we could wish. It remains to be seen what the rains will be like. We are having lots of difficulties, but no doubt marble palaces and steam-yachts will be the result of present inconvenience.

NORTHUMBERLAND CAMP, VICTORIA,
November 21, 1891.

We are working hard enough, and yet I am sure that we shall not be housed until the rains have set in in earnest. So far we have escaped with a few furious thunderstorms, followed each by two days downpour. Our camp is on a "kopje" one hundred feet high, and therefore all building materials have to be dragged up a very steep road by ox-waggon. Straight poles, varying from thirty to eighty feet in length, have to be cut in thousands, and though the "veldt" has never been touched by the axe, they are difficult to find. Though this is a grass country, I am now sending four miles for suitable thatch. Our foundations have to be blasted out of solid rock, and the framework of the houses has to be lashed with raw hide, with which material our lung-sick oxen supply us freely. The plaster for the walls is composed of ant-hill mud, and our oxen have a good deal to do with it before they die of lung-sickness. The mixture when put on makes a charming retreat for the blow-fly, and the smell of it pervades food, water, clothes, and temper.

Our prospects are capital, though we do not know the value of our properties yet. There is not much game to be shot about here, but the laughing hyæna comes nightly to our camp to mock our struggles. Lions also we have, and the gnu.

Mind you write to me soon, and tell me your *gnus* —*news* I mean.

NORTHUMBERLAND CAMP, VICTORIA.

November 22, 1891.

Things are going pretty well here in camp now, and, as far as our little Syndicate is concerned, I honestly believe that we shall make a lot of money. We now possess, by right of pegging, three properties, all of which I believe to be very good. I think that we shall peg out a fourth to-morrow, of which I have the greatest hopes, as its surface indications are extraordinarily rich. If we are lucky enough to find a fifth reef—and our luck up to now in reef-finding has been marvellous—we shall have exhausted our whole pegging right of two hundred claims or ten claims per man, before the rainy season fairly sets in. This all sounds hopeful, does it not? but I have not nearly finished. Our assayers are nearly sure that two of our reefs are very rich in platinum. I say, nearly sure, as neither of them know platinum so well as they know gold. Unfortunately we cannot build the assay and forge houses for a week or so, as we must shelter ourselves before we provide a roof for the nitric acid and the big bellows. A rich platinum mine is worth many gold mines, as you know that it is a much rarer metal.

Well, so much for our own properties and our chance of acquiring others. The great coup which I am trying to bring off now is the purchase of a

mine called The Dickens' Reef.* The ore assays, from every part of the mine, nearly five ounces to the ton. No one can tell what the mine may be worth, but the quartz we know of and which has been proved, must be worth close on a million. I hope and think that my negotiations will not fall through. Then there are two other properties that I am interested in, the "Inez" in the Mazoe field, near the Zambesi, and the "Blue-Jacket." The "Inez" is an old working, but is alas! on the belt of the "fly" country. The fly is the Tsetse, which kills everything except men. The old workers, whoever they may have been, had evidently no tools which could touch hard quartz, but they seem to have had some explosive material which made a certain impression on it. They have exposed the reef for a great depth, merely working its soft casing. The quartz in sight is all auriferous, and runs a good ounce to the ton.

Tell A. that if he likes to leave London in March of next year he can be at our camp in six weeks, and I will give him a month's big game shooting, and then we will come home together. He can coach it through the Transvaal to Tuli, and I will come down and meet him. If he likes to bring

* This Reef was afterwards acquired by the Northumberland Syndicate, and sold by them on advantageous terms to the Zambezia Exploring Company. The mine is now giving a very rich yield of gold, and it and the "Inez" are considered two of the best properties in Mashonaland.—ED.



From a photograph by Dr. M. Johnston THE MEMBERS OF THE EXPEDITION *To face p. 380*

a friend so much the better. The whole trip need not cost him more than two hundred pounds. The rush next year to this place will, I believe, be beyond anything ever known, but we have the luck of having the country to ourselves at present, and I hope and believe that we shall have made the most of it. I believe that there will be a flood of investment in mines here, some very good, others, as in all fields, very bad; but he could see the auriferous district for himself, and have all the benefit of our knowledge. I will peg him out a farm if he likes, and I believe that there is as much money in farming as in anything else. He could get a Dutchman, at about three pounds a month, to work it for him. If S. comes too, *tant mieux*.

A sad misfortune has befallen me to-day, I have lost my best salted horse, an animal invaluable in a country where unsalted horses die of horse-sickness. He was, I think, bitten by a snake, or else he ate poison plant.

NORTHUMBERLAND CAMP, VICTORIA,

November 25, 1891.

. . . . We have had no rain to speak of yet, and, in consequence, our camp is getting on apace. But we have difficulty in getting native labour, as this is their season for ploughing and planting. I described our camp before to you, but I wish that Edison

could invent some means for you to see it. I know no more beautiful spot in the world.

The "kopje," on which it is built, is actually on our Howick Reef, so we are quite close to our work. Our doctor takes photographs, and they are to be got at the Stereoscopic. It has certainly been no light task, both for Grey and myself up to the present. But, in spite of all our losses and anxieties, we are here at last with every prospect of being in for a good thing, which may make every one of us comfortable for life. It was disheartening enough to meet old diggers and people of every description coming down the road and damning the country, and it must have been a most anxious time for the Chartered Company. But I suppose that their minds are at rest now, and probably the public opinion is shown by the price of their shares, though I have not a notion what that is now. I should be very glad to hold some myself I know.

We were the second biggest party on the road. The other one is disorganised and demoralised, and their losses have been fearful—so have ours. I suppose that we have lost a thousand pounds' worth of animals since we started, but we compare very favourably with them. The party were in low spirits decidedly when I joined them here, but they are cheerful enough now, and, for a large party, there could not be a more united one. As for success, it is too early in the day to talk of that yet, but the great thing is that we now believe in the country

thoroughly. I think that some of us were a little doubtful at one time. You say the country looks as if no animals would live in it, and this in the fly country is absolutely true. But we have none of them here. They always follow the big game, and we are two days' ride from elephant and buffalo country. But lions we have. I told you that we shot one about a month ago, and a carpenter working for me shot a young male about a week ago, not a mile from the camp. Panthers, leopards, hyænas, and jackalls are fairly common, but we have only seen them so far, not shot any. As we have a large herd of cattle and donkeys they are likely to stay by us, but as the cattle and donkeys are "kraaled" every night, and the drivers sleep by the kraals, there is not much danger to them. Does it shock you to know that our day for shooting is Sunday? Fresh meat is a matter of great importance, and the other days are devoted to work. There are very few birds. Occasionally some one shoots a few guinea-fowl, partridges, or pheasants, and there are two sorts of bustard. But we buy Kaffir fowls, and at present their price is an empty cartridge case, which the Mashonas use as snuff-boxes. We are near no big rivers, so we get no fish. We have ploughed a little ground and planted the ordinary vegetables. At present the only vegetable we have is Mashona rice, which is excellent, and occasionally sweet potatoes, which I have always thought nasty. But now that the natives know that we have got a permanent

camp, we shall get lots of supplies of all sorts, as soon as their planting is over, instead of having to send a waggon twenty miles away as we do now.

We see the people from the fort pretty often. Chaplin, who is in command there, is a capital fellow. The health of our party is excellent, but there is an epidemic of mumps running its course among our native allies just at present. I should think that next year there will be a great rush here. I shall be surprised, too, if a number of people do not come out to shoot in Manica, and away towards the Zambesi.

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